Art and Architecture of

Ancient Kashmir

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Ancient Kashmir

For the first time in this volume is presented a comprehensive survey of the art and architecture of ancient Kashmir. From about the third century until the Islamization of Kashmir in the fourteenth, the region was a bastion of both Buddhism and Hinduism. Not only was Kashmir an important centre of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy and learning, which attracted scholars from all parts of India as well as Central Asia, China and Tibet, but artistic forms created by generations of Kashmiri artists were much in demand in other regions. Recognizably distinct styles, both in art and architecture, evolved in Kashmir and proved particularly popular in the neighbouring regions of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tibet. The book not only discusses the remains of both Buddhist and Hindu architecture in ancient Kashmir, but also provides a fascinating insight into the history of the various sculptural traditions as well as the connections between the arts of Kashmir and Tibet.

It is hoped that a future volume will present the art and architecture of Kashmir's Islamic heritage.

Dust-jacket:

Clockwise, lower left to right: Pages 84 (fig. 9), 124 (fig. 12), 60 (fig. 5), 111 (fig. 10), 103 (fig. 14), 43 (fig. 1), 23 (fig. 7), 4 (fig. 5)
Centre: Page 36 (fig. 8)

Preliminary Pages:

i Landscape, Kashmir, from an album of Photographic Views compiled by B.E. Crocker of the eighty-seventh Fusiliers and dated AD 1893.
Phillips Antiques, Bombay.

iv Bejbehara temple, Kashmir; albumen print of *c.* AD 1880-1890.
Phillips Antiques, Bombay.

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Art and Architecture of Ancient Kashmir

Edited by Pratapaditya Pal

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Dedication

This volume is dedicated to
Karl J. Khandalavala
a scholar for all seasons

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Senior Editorial Executive
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Executive-in-Charge
(Design and Production)
Behroze J. Bilimoria

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Introduction

Pratapaditya Pal

> Such is Kashmir, the country which may be conquered by the force of spiritual merit but not by armed force; where the inhabitants in consequence fear more the next world; where there are hot baths in winter, comfortable landing places on the river-banks, where the rivers being free from aquatic animals are without peril; where, realizing that the land created by his father is unable to bear heat, the hot-rayed sun honours it by bearing himself with softness even in summer. Learning, high dwelling houses, saffron, iced water, grapes and the like—what is a commonplace there, is difficult to secure in paradise.
>
> Kalhana[1]

The twelfth-century historian Kalhana's effusive description of his own country is understandable, but it happens to be true. Countless visitors since then have compared the country with paradise, and it remains one of the most popular places of tourism in India. While most people are enchanted with Kashmir's natural beauty, and are charmed with the shawls for which Kashmir is famous the world over, few are familiar with other aesthetic expressions of the Kashmiris, such as the visual arts and architecture. Not only are these artistic forms worthy of study in their own right, but for well over a millenium before the fourteenth century when the Islamization of Kashmir began, this small, mountain-girt, idyllic valley was a major cultural centre for both Hindu and Buddhist civilizations. Kashmir's contribution to the development of both religions, to Hindu philosophy, and to Sanskrit literature as well as to the arts is not just profound but totally disproportionate to its geographical size.[2]

If the visitor to Kashmir is not impressed with the architecture of ancient Kashmir, that is because few of the buildings are extant. As elsewhere on the subcontinent, there are no remains of palaces and mansions of any antiquity. Except for ruined foundations, not a single Buddhist monastery has survived. Yet from literary descriptions we know that some of them were large establishments with many

structures. Nevertheless, with what remains and with literary and artistic evidence, Robert Fisher has provided an excellent overview of Buddhist architecture, pointing out its uniqueness and its subsequent importance for Hindu architecture. Buddhism was introduced into Kashmir soon after the Buddha's demise and the Maurya emperor Asoka is said to have built stupas in the third century BC. The earliest surviving Buddhist remains, however, are at a site called Harwan which cannot be dated earlier than the fourth century AD. Nevertheless, it is one of the most intriguing archaeological sites in India. Fisher has convincingly argued that it may have been a much older shrine of the little-known ascetic sect, the Ajivikas, and was later occupied by the Buddhists.

Although the Hindu temples of Kashmir have not fared much better than the Buddhist shrines, fortunately the few that are still standing provide a fairly good idea of the region's architectural achievements. Some may well go back to the early Karkota period (*c.* AD 600-855), and at least one exquisite little structure at Payar is intact. The most well-known and frequently visited temple is of course the great Martand, dedicated to the sun-god. Although in ruins, it still conveys some of its original grandeur. While generally it is regarded as a Lalitaditya period structure, Fisher has demonstrated that the core may already have been in existence when Lalitaditya decided to expand it further. The architectural history of Kashmir is particularly fascinating, for not only is the style unique on the Indian subcontinent but it is also a successful amalgam of indigenous and foreign elements. As Coomaraswamy summed up so clearly and succinctly:

> The typical Brahmanical temple of Kashmir from about 750-1250 A.D. has a special character of its own, and in some uses a curiously European aspect, due in part to a Gandharan inheritance of certain elements, though all the details are Indian. The special forms include a double pyramidal roof; triangular pediment enclosing a trefoil niche; fluted columns with Doric or Ionic capitals; a wood or stone "lantern" ceiling of superimposed intersecting squares; and cloistered courts or colonnaded peristyles surrounding the main shrine.[3]

As in architecture, so also in Kashmiri style sculpture, the roots lay in the Gandharan sculptural tradition. The influence of Gandhara is prominently perceptible in pre-Karkota Kashmir sculpture, but by the seventh century Kashmiri artists seem to have become more aware of the fifth-century Gupta style of the Gangetic plains. Because of their strong reliance on the earlier Gandharan style, Kashmiri sculptors continued to model their figures in a more naturalistic style. However, from the seventh century onwards this naturalism is often restrained by the more abstract modelling of the human body that is a significant characteristic of the Gupta aesthetic. Because of the strong presence of Tocharians and other Central Asian peoples, particularly in Karkota Kashmir, one occasionally comes across elements that may have been borrowed from those regions as well as from China. Apart from its distinctive plastic qualities, Kashmiri sculpture is also distinguished by facial features that are quite different from those of figures in other areas and by the mode of attire. The long tunic or coat and trousers are common for both men and women; and when the woman is shown wearing a sari, she is still provided with a tailored blouse.

Both Buddhist and Hindu sculptures have survived, but no Jain sculpture or shrine has yet been discovered. As is the case with style, so also the iconography of both Hindu and Buddhist sculptures in Kashmir displays regional characteristics and unique features. Some iconographic concepts have become hallmarks of Kashmiri art and are rarely found in other Indian regional arts. The image of Vishnu with four faces is perhaps the most well-known example. Apart from the four faces, in such images one encounters two of his personified attributes, rather than Lakshmi and Sarasvati or Lakshmi and Garuda as in other areas. Unique also is the presence of the earth goddess emerging from the pedestal between his feet. Similarly, in Buddhist art too, we come across images such as the Norton Simon Buddha, the

ivory Temptation of the Buddha in the Cleveland Museum, and the Kurukulla, which reflect regional iconographic idiosyncrasies. For instance, the elaborate pedestals consisting of rock formations on which the Buddhist deities are often made to sit are typically Kashmiri and are not encountered elsewhere in the subcontinent. Very likely these highly imaginative and stylized mountains are meant to represent Mount Meru. It would appear that the idea travelled north from Kashmir to Central Asia, China and Japan.

The surviving Kashmiri sculptures also reveal the wide variety of material used by Kashmiri artists. No wood sculptures of any antiquity have been found in Kashmir proper, but the continuation of the craft clearly indicates its popularity in ancient times. The surviving tenth-eleventh-century Indian sculptures and architectural carvings in Ladakh must have been inspired by Kashmiri models and some even carved by Kashmiri artists. The principal sites of terracotta sculpture are Ushkur in the Valley and Akhnur in Jammu, and both were Buddhist settlements. Little Hindu sculpture in terracotta has survived.

Stone sculptures generally adorned both Hindu and Buddhist temples, and were employed largely as didactic icons in the subsidiary shrines and niches. While this is the general practice in other areas as well, what appears to have been peculiar to Kashmir and adjoining regions such as Chamba is the use of large metal images inside the sanctums. Kalhana has left us descriptions of numerous such images made of gold, silver and copper alloy, both Hindu and Buddhist. In fact, even if one considers some of his descriptions to be hyperbolic, there can be little doubt that some of the largest metal sculptures in ancient India adorned the lofty temples erected by such monarchs as Lalitaditya (first half of the eighth century) or Avantivarman (AD 855-883).

Most surviving metal sculptures from Kashmir are made in brass or another alloy in which copper is predominant. Kashmiri metal sculptures particularly of the Karkota period are further distinguished by a rich inlay of copper and silver. Because of the presence as well as the influence of Kashmiri artists in contiguous areas such as Swat in Pakistan, Ladakh in India and Western Tibet, it is often difficult to distinguish between a Kashmiri bronze and one created in these regions. The recent researches of Chandra Reedy, which are summarized in an article included in this volume, have now gone a long way toward clearing up some of the confusion by detailed technical analysis. Her article demonstrates how science can supplement the conclusions reached in the essay on metal sculptures by this writer.

The two articles by John Siudmak and Fisher on the stone sculptures of Kashmir cover six centuries of Kashmiri history from *c.* AD 600 to 1200. This is when Kashmiri sculptors were at their busiest and most creative. Yet to date no attempts have been made by scholars to provide a substantial overview of the history of Kashmiri sculpture during this period. The articles included here not only fill an important gap in our knowledge of the history and development of Kashmiri sculpture, but hopefully they will provide a framework for further and more comprehensive evaluation of a sculptural tradition that had wide influence over a large region of Asia.

Sir Aurel Stein's translation of Kalhana's history of ancient Kashmiri kings, as well as a few chance discoveries, have made students of Indian art at least aware of a tradition of metal sculpture in Kashmir from the early decades of this century. The continuous emergence of Kashmiri style bronzes from Tibetan monasteries since the 1950s clearly establishes the importance of Kashmir as a major centre of metal casting in the past. No less sensational and exciting has been the appearance of a group of extraordinary ivory sculptures from Tibet which forms the subject-matter of Stan Czuma's essay. Apart from providing an up-to-date review of the material, the essay clearly demonstrates that at least during the eighth century there was a flourishing school of ivory sculpture in the Valley. Significantly, all the surviving examples are Buddhist, which is why they were transported to Tibet and miraculously preserved.

The final essay in this volume completes the history of pre-Islamic Kashmiri art by discussing the close artistic connection of Kashmir with its Tibetan neighbours to the east. While it is now well known that the art and artists of Kashmir played a seminal role in formulating the religious art and iconography of Western Tibet in the eleventh century, the extent of the influence remains rather vague. Whereas the Kashmiri-Tibetan connection in sculpture has been known for some time, it is only in the last decade or so that the murals in the monasteries of Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh have become more familiar to the scholar as well as the layman. These murals, together with some illuminated Tibetan manuscripts, are the only surviving examples through which one can form an idea of the art of painting in ancient Kashmir. No form of painting in Kashmir proper has survived and it is unlikely that any examples exist. Thanks to the piety of the Tibetans, we can now say that not only was there a flourishing tradition of painting in ancient Kashmir, but its expressions were no less brilliant than the celebrated murals at Ajanta.

NOTES

1. R. S. Pandit, trans., *Kalhana's Rajatarangini* (New Delhi, 1968), p. 12.
2. For a general review see S. C. Ray, *Early History and Culture of Kashmir,* 2nd ed. (New Delhi, 1970).
3. A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art,* Dover edition (New York, 1965), p. 143.

□

The Enigma of Harwan

Robert E. Fisher

While the Mughal emperor Jahangir's Shalimar gardens in Kashmir continue to enjoy popularity, few visitors proceed further around the hill to visit the ancient ruins of Harwan, where, over a thousand years before Jahangir, some equally perceptive though unknown person selected the dramatic hillside location to build a monastic establishment. This site remained hidden under rock and landslides until the early years of the twentieth century when an excavation revealed remarkable finds that indicate several unusual, perhaps unique, aspects of early art and architecture in Kashmir. In addition to several ruined foundations, the greatest number of objects recovered from the site consists of terracotta tiles, modest in size but rich in pictorial imagery and unlike any others known. It is the presence of these tiles that not only contributes to the unusual interest of the architectural arrangement of Harwan but also to its fascinating mystery.

All reports refer to Harwan as Buddhist and there is ample evidence of this association with the site. The lowest terrace contains the remains of what was once a stupa and scattered about this area were fragments of terracotta statues of Buddhist images. Several smaller foundations may be the remains of viharas, the residential quarters for Buddhist monks. Small terracotta and stone plaques, bearing likenesses of Buddhist stupas, were also found among the ruins. *Fig. 1*

In a note to his translation of Kalhana's *Rajatarangini,* Stein equates this modern Harwan with Kalhana's Sadarhadvana. According to Kalhana: "And a Bodhisattva lived then in this country as the sole lord of the land, namely the glorious Nagarjuna, who resided at Sadarhadvana."[1]

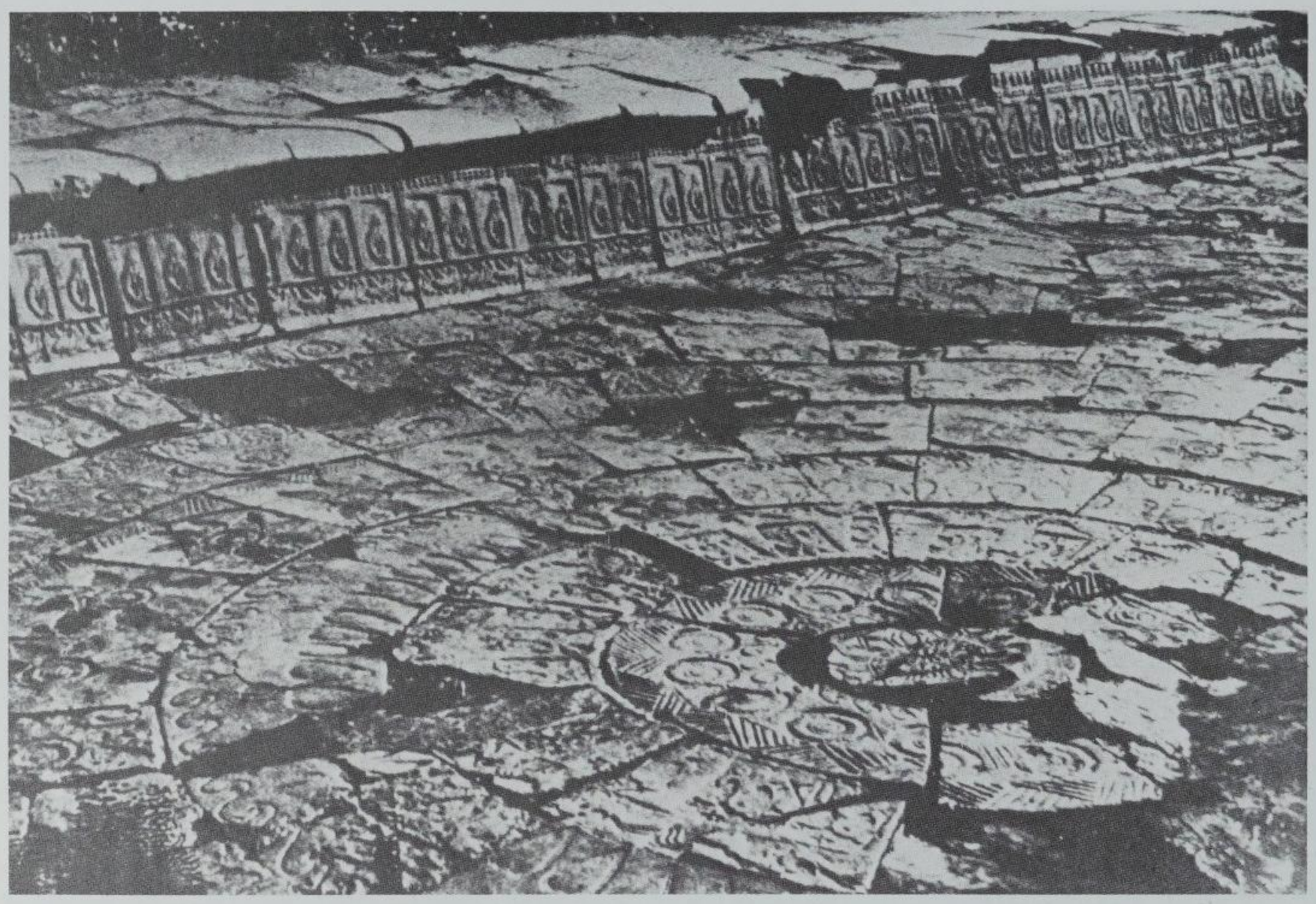
Stein's identification of Sadarhadvana with modern Harwan is based upon the earlier interpretations (by other scholars) of Kalhana's work, which placed it near the Shalimar gardens, as well as Stein's own awareness of artefacts being found near Harwan village as the Srinagar waterworks were being constructed. The name Nagarjuna, one of the early masters of Buddhist philosophy and the founder of the Madhyamika school, is mentioned only once again by Kalhana, and Harwan (or Sadarhadvana) is otherwise unknown in the literature of Kashmir, including the records of Chinese visitors. Very little is known of the life of Nagarjuna, beyond the likelihood that he lived in the second century in the region known today as Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Pradesh. His visit to Kashmir is not improbable, but there is no independent evidence to corroborate Kalhana's statement.

All the Buddhist remains at Harwan were found about the lower terraces, but as one

1. View from upper terraces at Harwan to valley beyond.

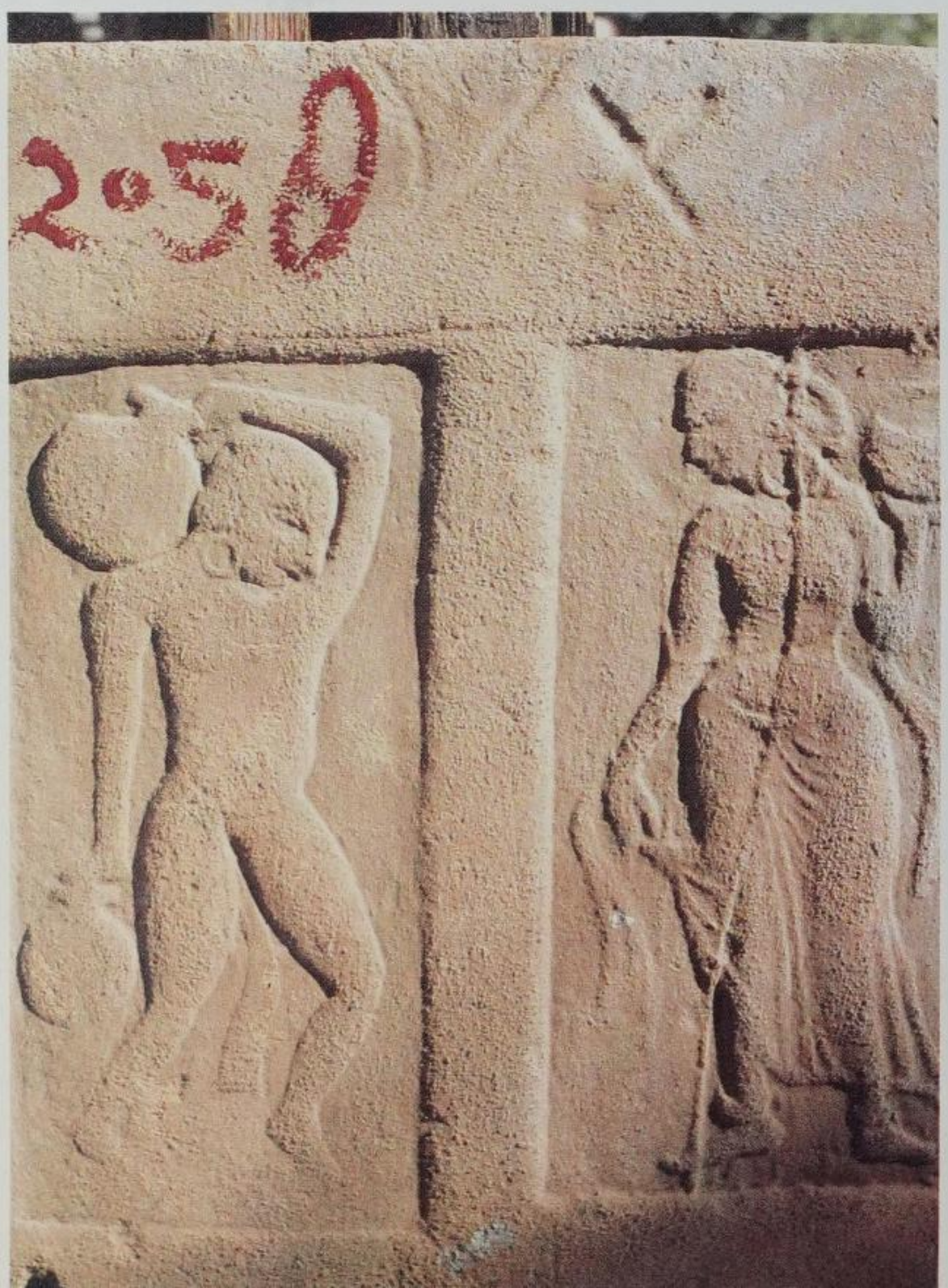
2. Apsidal temple upon highest terrace at Harwan.

3. Plaque with figures, Harwan; third-fourth century; red terracotta; 52 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Given in memory of Christian Humann by Robert Hatfield Elsworth.



4. Pavement and platform at apsidal temple, Harwan. (After D. Mitra, *Buddhist Monuments* [Calcutta, 1980], pl. 85).

5. Tile with man carrying pots and a woman carrying a bowl, Harwan; terracotta. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.



6. Tile with hunter and a deer, Harwan; terracotta. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

climbs higher the iconography becomes more intriguing. Upon reaching the highest terrace one encounters the ruins of an apsidal shrine and the unique courtyard of remarkable *Fig. 2* terracotta tiles, surrounded on three sides by a low wall of numbered plaques each portraying identical images of an emaciated ascetic figure. Neither the pavement tiles nor the plaques with figures of ascetics agree readily with known Buddhist sites. In fact, Hindu and Jain establishments likewise fail to suggest a prototype or even later, comparable examples.

Thus, while one is intrigued by the architectural elements of Harwan, one is mystified by the arresting figures of ascetics who do not appear to be particularly Buddhist. Indeed, *Fig. 3* Buddhism generally abhors such extreme asceticism and self-mortification and, while figures of ascetics are found in Buddhist reliefs, in a narrative context, in no other Buddhist site, whether in India or abroad, is the ascetic motif so prominently displayed. Who are these ascetics and what are they doing in a Buddhist monument? Can their presence be explained in a Buddhist context, or are we encountering here a religious establishment of some other persuasion that was later occupied by the Buddhists? Before attempting to answer some of these questions it is helpful to first review what remains of this little-known but fascinating site.

I. The Floor Tiles

Harwan was first noticed in modern times, around 1895, when part of its decorated brick pavement was unearthed by accident during the construction of the Srinagar waterworks. These fragments continued to be discovered about the hillside, and R. C. Kak illustrated several in his 1923 catalogue of the Sri Pratap Singh Museum.[2] During the same decade Kak conducted an excavation, briefly noting his discoveries in the *Illustrated London News* and more fully in his book on Kashmir monuments, published in the following decade.[3] Coomaraswamy mentioned the site and its tiles in his 1927 survey of Indian art, with a trenchant remark about the similarity between the Harwan tiles and examples from China.[4] Subsequent allusions to Harwan have generally repeated Kak's findings and no further excavations have been reported, although some restoration work is presently underway. The site is dated variously between the fourth and seventh century. Some of the tiles are kept in the museum in Srinagar, others in a building at the site and unknown numbers are in museums and private collections around the world. Unfortunately, few photographs of the tiles were taken *in situ* *Fig. 4* before their dispersal and those that were only afford partial views.

Historical and literary information about Harwan is also limited. It is mentioned only twice in Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* and although Hsuan Tsang (seventh century) and Ou-K'ong (eighth century) have both left records of their visits to Kashmir, neither mentions Harwan, which is rather curious in view of their interest in Buddhism, and the unique features of this monument.

The entire site of Harwan is not very large, consisting of about ten ruins located upon several terraces cut into a steep hillside. The highest terrace, as mentioned before, contains the ruined foundations of what was once an apsidal temple and around this structure was located a pavement of terracotta tiles. The shapes of the tiles were determined by their location within concentric circles, with most about 30.5—46 centimetres long. According to Kak, they occupied an area 49 by 38 metres. The Kharoshthi numerals found on the tiles indicate a date sometime before the end of the fifth century, when Kharoshthi ceased to be used in the north-west, and limited thermoluminescence testing supports this date.[5]

Remarkable in its variety, the subject-matter of the tiles may be divided into four main categories: humans, animals, flora and abstract designs. Among the human representations are found both male and female figures engaged in many different activities. Some dance as they play a drum and others are seen carrying water-pots. A graceful lady on one tile walks *Fig. 5* with a basket while on another a male stands guard, holding a long spear in his left hand. Elsewhere a hunter shoots an arrow while riding an animal, while on another, a male figure, *Fig. 6* wielding a mace-like weapon and striding over a spoked wheel, appears to be in combat with a feline, griffin-like creature which stands on its hind legs, similar to an early relief from Sanchi's stupa number two.[6] There are several variations on the theme of figures conversing *Fig. 7* behind a railing or balcony. On some, only the heads are shown and one of the figures holds the stalk of a flower. On others, the bust of the figure is represented, and most groups (usually four) appear to be in animated conversation. Quite a few of the tiles illustrate the continuous pattern made by figures supporting a large garland or vine, with the rest of the space being occupied by various flowers and vases with flowers.

The animals, both real and mythical, are presented in a fairly wide variety. Among the more naturalistic representations are the galloping horse, the long-horned stag, the familiar and inevitable elephant, walking through what appears to be a lotus garden, and a cow suckling her calf. The horned stags are usually seen standing with their heads turned back as if looking at the large, crescent-shaped object in the corner of the tile. Among birds, the goose or gander and the rooster seem to have especially caught the fancy of the Harwan artists. Roosters appear in several forms: inside roundels with elaborate foliate tails, a more elaborate version with outstretched wings (more like a phoenix), and as a pair, perhaps fighting or playing with what seems to be a flower bud between them. There is also a *makara* type of fanciful or mythical

7. Tile with conversing couple and a deer, Harwan; terracotta. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

animal with a serpent-like body and curling tail, a large head with the tongue protruding from an open mouth and a nose that curves upwards somewhat like an elephant's trunk. Various flowers surround the beast and a symbol of two interlocking circles is placed above and slightly behind the creature.

The floral designs consist of variations of lotus plants and aquatic leaves that not only fill individual tiles but also serve as border motifs, either as continuous patterns or as individual plants or stylized petals. Round pots with small necks and sprouting flowers appear frequently, and individual circular patterns, made up of petals and leaves as well as a stylized version of the well-known fleur-de-lis, are represented. There is at least one instance of a floral scroll consisting of a vine and bunches of grapes. Floral motifs used as border designs include roundels and dots, geometric repeat patterns, rosettes and simple hatching. *Fig. 8*

This summary of motifs is based upon material published by Kak and subsequent publications of various museums. To date, no complete inventory of the pavement tiles stored in Kashmir or of the fragments scattered about in other collections has been done.

The visual impact of this site, amidst nature's splendour, must have been considerable. The rubble-filled walls of the raised apsidal temple, its doorway looking out upon the valley, were probably covered with a layer of smooth plaster and the lowest portions faced with the same terracotta plaques of ascetic figures which surrounded the area on three sides, forming a low wall that established the limits of the temple and separated it from the hillside behind. The hundreds of terracotta tiles which covered the ground around the temple, arranged in several concentric circles, were perhaps painted in bright colours to accentuate their pictorial designs. Upon climbing the rather steep hillside, the worshipper was confronted with this splendid array of decorative and figurative images surrounding a house of worship. The moulded tiles of the floor, with the lotus as the most frequent image, must have reminded the worshipper of the lakes he had left below.

Such a dynamic and possibly colourful floor treatment, not common by any means, is known from much earlier times and over a wide geographic area. Textiles no doubt have a long history of use as colourful and decorative floor covering. Assyrian palaces from the late eighth century BC made this longer lasting by carving such decorative textile designs into stone slabs but limited only to thresholds.[7] They also utilized baked bricks set into bitumen as floor covering.[8] In the ancient Mediterranean world it was common to overlay beaten earth with another material, such as brick or gypsum, then a layer of plaster. In Egypt and Crete this was sometimes painted.[9] Hellenistic Greece was known for pebble floor mosaics as early as *c.* 300 BC and at Pella inlaid terracotta strips were utilized to help define portions of the pictorial subject.[10] In addition to their fame as producers of colourful mosaic floors, the Romans also utilized terracotta squares. Apparently, glazed decorative floor tiles did not appear in the West until the thirteenth century as a result of Islamic influence.[11] However, none of these cultures utilized decorative clay or terracotta tiles to the extent found at Harwan, although Parthian and Sassanian cultures, occupying most of Iran and West Asia from the third century BC until the coming of Islam in the seventh century, did continue that region's tradition of clay as a primary construction material.

In the eastern areas of Parthian rule some clay bricks even included numbers, similar to the system used at Harwan, to assist in correct placement.[12] However, despite the popularity of brick and terracotta in Parthian and Sassanian areas, little mention of moulded designs upon floor tiles has been recorded. What moulded decoration does occur seems to be limited to wall plaques, of terracotta and stucco, with motifs similar to some painted designs such as are preserved from Parthian remains at Dura Europas.[13]

Central Asian sites have revealed some use of decorative floors. In his diary of the German expeditions to Turfan, von Le Coq notes that the "... beautiful fired tiles which covered the floors of many temples ..." were much coveted by the local people as building material.[14] No tile is illustrated but one might assume they are similar to those found at Dunhuang, consisting of floral motifs of many-petalled lotuses but otherwise having no pictorial representations. Similar fired floor tiles have been excavated within China proper. Of Tang date, the tiles are decorated entirely with floral patterns.[15]

It would appear that the most richly decorated, pictorial floor tiles in Central and East Asia are found in Korea. In addition to their own version of the Chinese decorative tile, during the sixth-seventh centuries the Koreans of the Paekche Kingdom produced several remarkable examples with moulded portrayals of a landscape and a mythical beast.[16] Forming a repeat pattern, they were part of a series; however the excavation reports do not clearly indicate whether they were exclusively for wall or floor use.

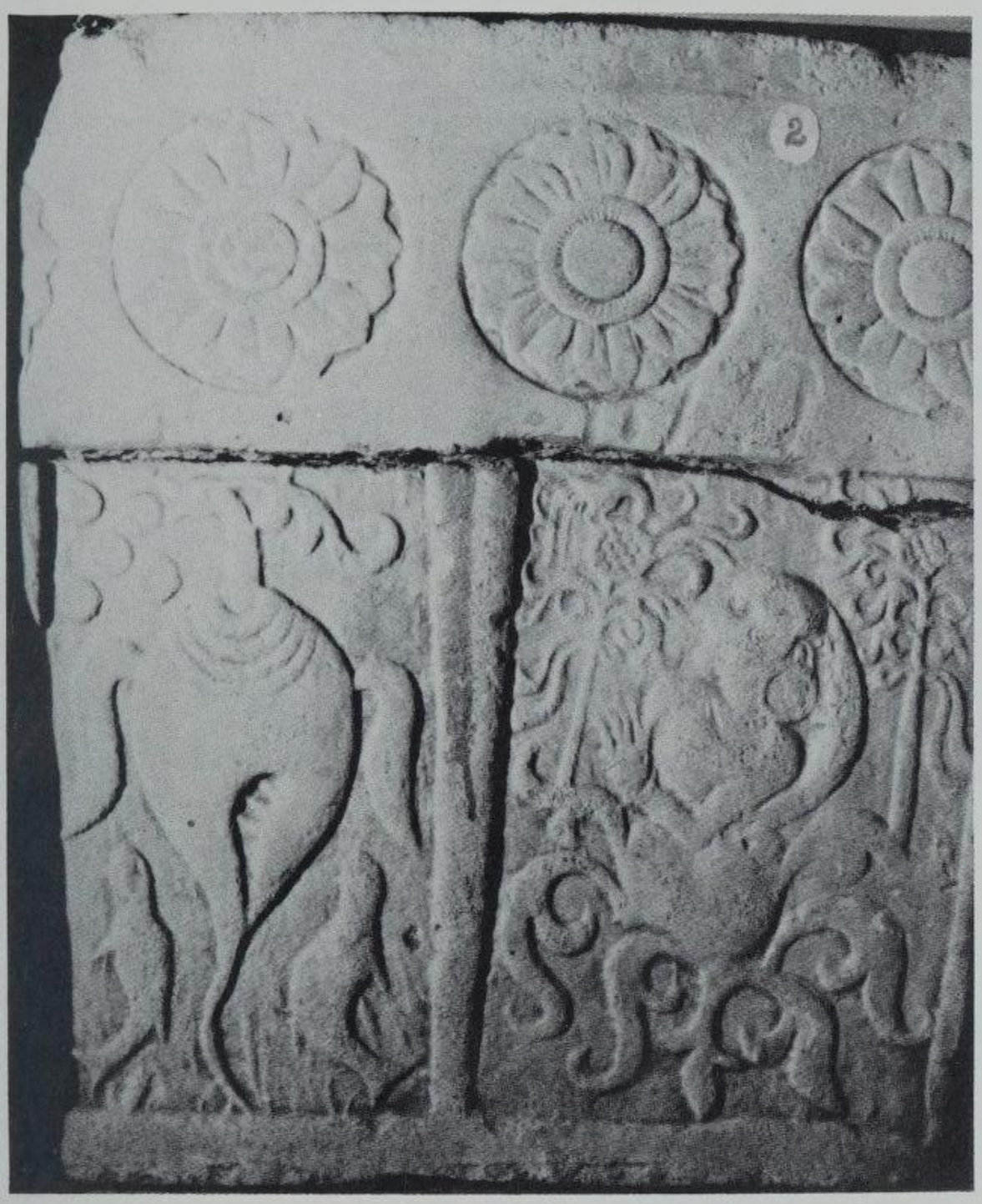
Some remains of floor tiles have been found within India and the areas of the north-west adjacent to Kashmir. At least one Buddhist monument from Gandhara, dated to the fourth or fifth century,[17] once contained a courtyard of such tiles. The designs on the terracottas at Bhamala consist entirely of geometric patterns with none of the pictorial richness of Harwan. Marshall also found evidence of the use of tiles made of glass and his excavations led him to suggest that the entire processional path (*pradaksinapatha*) around one stupa may have been so constructed. These floor tiles were made of a coarse, translucent glass, of bright azure colour, with a few of black, white or yellow. Many were apparently removed from their original positions and reused elsewhere. The Italian excavations in Swat revealed another processional path made, in part, of blue glass tiles.[18] However, like those found by Marshall at Taxila, these have no pictorial decoration.

Fig. 9 Two examples of early glazed floor tiles from the Mathura region, with patterns similar to those from Bhamala, have recently been published.[19] These tiles, according to Irwin, were also once part of a processional path and possibly symbolized water around the stupa. Their lotus designs, indicative of water plants, and the blue glass tiles from Taxila and Swat, tend to support his thesis of the stupa floating upon the cosmic ocean. Such tiles were often reused, as in the case of Harwan, where some of the floor tiles described here were removed and utilized as flooring around the Buddhist stupa on a lower terrace.

This summary of types of floor decoration suggests that Harwan, with its moulded terracottas of such pictorial variety, is unusual but not unique. With the possible exception of the Korean tiles (and their placement on the floor is open to question) this method of floor construction *Figs. 10, 11* did not appear again in Kashmir or elsewhere. However, there is one site in Kashmir, presently under study, which indicates that the Kashmiri tradition did not begin with Harwan. Mr. M. H. Makhdoomi, former curator of the Sri Pratap Singh Museum in Srinagar, has uncovered numbers of terracotta floor tiles near Pahalgam.[20] He has thus far published only line drawings of some of them but they suggest an earlier tradition, also pointing to Western associations such as the moulded tiles and imagery on seal impressions from Nisa in Russian Central Asia. Kharoshthi numerals appear on these tiles as well and Makhdoomi feels the site was an early Hinayana construction of Kushan times, and the earliest thus far known in Kashmir.

Although the direct sources of the particular type of moulded terracottas at Harwan are not easily found, many of the motifs and their style of representation are readily identified. Some of the themes on the Harwan tiles can be linked to material remains of the Parthian people. Occupying a vast area, the movements of these semi-nomads about West Asia spread their culture from Syria clear into Northern India. They inherited the remnants of the Achaemenian Kingdom of Iran as well as the Hellenistic culture left by Alexander's conquests in the late fourth century BC. During the early centuries of their activity they spread a Greco-Iranian art over a wide area and though they were conquered by the Sassanians of the third-fourth centuries, much of their cultural achievement continued. The Parthians actually occupied areas of Gandhara (Taxila), and the Sakas (Scythians) who settled into much of the north-west Swat Valley of Pakistan and the Western Punjab were closely linked to them. There are remains of their architectural monuments as well as painting and sculpture. They used glass tesserae for mosaics and fired brick floors have been found at their shrines in Babylonia, Iran and India, including at the Mat shrine near Mathura.[21] Many of these elements are continued into Sassanian times, giving the era from the third century BC until the advent of Islam both consistency and continuity. The similarity between the subjects found at Harwan and many of the painted ceiling panels at Dura Europas, in the extreme western part of the Parthian area, is best explained by the long history and extent of this empire. The *Fig. 12* most obvious Parthian feature of the Harwan tiles is the presence of the archer on horseback. This motif was so closely associated with these peoples that it is known universally as the "Parthian Shot." Copied throughout much of Asia, including China, it is found as far east as Korea. The Parthian mode of dress, with leggings and long skirts, diaphanous garments and prominent ear-rings is well known among Gandharan images and is also found upon the Harwan tiles. The long-horned stag, a sacred animal among the nomads of West Asia,[22] and the rooster, probably of symbolic meaning also, became popular decorative images at Harwan.

Some of the descriptions of Parthian finds north of the Oxus River in Soviet Central Asia are similar to those from Harwan. From Khalachayan in Uzbekistan have come fired tiles (from walls) illustrating classical figures and representations of people who ". . . no doubt belonged to the native population of the area."[23] Kak had long ago suggested that the facial types at Harwan reflected the ethnic peoples then occupying Kashmir, namely Central



8. Tile with aquatic motifs, Harwan; terracotta. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

9. Tiles from Mathura. Government Museum, Mathura.

10. Tile with composite mythical animals, Lidroo; terracotta. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

11. Tile with man and deer, Lidroo; terracotta. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

Asians and even possibly the Kushans. Another site, near Bukhara, has revealed numbers of decorative stuccos with geometric and vegetation ornament and processions of animals and birds.[24] Fragments of wall-paintings from the Parthian site of Toprak Kala also illustrate themes similar to those seen at Harwan and the intertwined serpents from Lidroo are also found among Parthian remains in Iran.[25]

Fig. 13 The overall plan of Harwan may also be due to Parthian influence. The great Parthian fire temple at Surkh Kotal dedicated by Kanishka and located in northern Afghanistan,[26] is a terraced structure with a courtyard surrounding the main temple, located upon the highest level. Both Harwan and Surkh Kotal originally had a stairway leading through the centre of each terrace.

Parthian influence however does not entirely explain the pictorial imagery of the Harwan floor tiles. Some of the images clearly originate from Indian sources. The motif of a conversing couple upon a balcony was a popular subject in earlier Indian art. Figures playing amidst a flowering vine and others seated in cross-legged posture as well as the *makara*-type creature are more closely related to Indian representations than to Parthian.

Amidst all the images at Harwan, be they foreign or Indian, one stands apart with compelling force. The repeated portrayals of a crouching ascetic form a dramatic border to the variety of lively forms of the floor and provide the most enigmatic problem for the entire site.

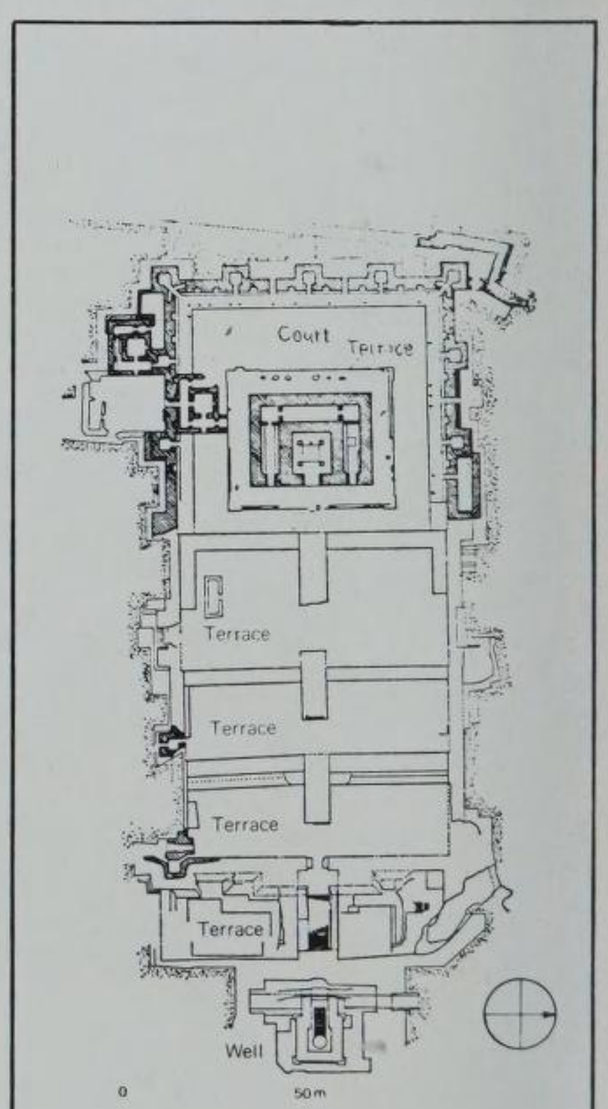
II. Plaques with Ascetics

Surrounding the upper terrace, these remarkable images dominate the site by virtue of their placement, repetition and haunting strangeness. These emaciated figures cast an intense, ominous feeling over an otherwise lively array of images that seems to celebrate the everyday world of man and nature. The contrast is startling.

The seated ascetic is shown in profile against a plain background which serves to accentuate his dramatic features. The emaciation, so vivid in the deep eye sockets and thin, drawn torso, is emphasized by the unusual pose. The thin legs are pulled up against the body and the legs are pressed together by weak, frail arms with hands resting atop the knees. Long, untied and unadorned hair flows back over the shoulders. No evidence of garments or ornaments can be found. This vision of extreme yogic asceticism seems to float without support, as if so cramped inside some invisible container that the figure is unnaturally compressed. Individual tiles often have one of its border images divided and thus the numerals enabled the installation to proceed quickly.[27] On some of the tiles the Kharoshthi numerals are found upon the raised area between the two ascetics while on others the numbers are placed above and behind

12. Tile with hunting scene; Parthian, *c.* second century. Trustees of the British Museum.

13. Diagram of Surkh Kotal, Afghanistan. (After Colledge, *Parthian Art*, p. 43).



the head. It has been pointed out that this may have been done to avoid the lengthy, higher numbers.[28] By beginning over, in a different place, the less cumbersome, lower numerals could be used twice. The facial features, hair-styles and jewellery of the heads atop each tile have suggested to some scholars a people from outside India, a likely possibility during the early centuries of the first millennium. Kak even interprets their appearance as reflecting the Kushan peoples of the previous epoch.

This posture of the ascetic is seldom found elsewhere. The only attempt at a direct identification was by Kak, with an otherwise unknown posture he labels *kakasana* or "crow posture."[29] A small terracotta figurine of a seated ascetic, probably made during the last centuries BC, is a rare example of an image approximating this pose. Here emaciation is indicated by deep rib lines that reach around to the back. There is no indication of clothing although the figure wears large ear ornaments. The hands rest atop the shoulders rather than upon the knees and the head is shaved, unlike the flowing hair of the Harwan ascetics. *Fig. 15* *Fig. 14*

As in the case of the known images, the various texts describing the many yogic postures also fail to quite match the Harwan pose. For instance the Kashmiri text, the *Visnudharmottarapurana,* describes a posture known as *viskambhita* in which one ". . . is thoughtful, anxious, depressed, dejected or love-lorn." According to the text, it consists of the legs, thighs and hand " . . . all curved up . . . " with the eyes closed.[30] A stone relief, perhaps of Maurya or Sunga date, may be an example of this pose, rare among archaeological remains. A Tantric text from Bengal describes another yogic posture that has a stronger resemblance to the Harwan representation. The adept should sit in a posture called *yonimudrasana* and ". . . his knees should be so raised that they touch his chin and his arms should bind the knees. Thus he should sit with his gaunt body and do breathing exercises."[31]

Although the exact Harwan type of ascetic is not known elsewhere, the portrayal of the ascetic type itself is widespread. Asceticism plays a part in almost all Indian religious systems, differing in the extent of the practice from sect to sect and, judging from archaeological remains, from one geographic area to another. Most Buddhist and Hindu representations show the ascetic type in a seated pose, usually in proximity to a hermit's thatched hut or a tree and nearly always wearing some type of clothing. Usually the ascetic is a brahmin, with the sacred thread (*yajnopavita*), and has his hair arranged in some fashion, often piled atop his head. In a rare Gupta terracotta illustrating the Hindu Nara-Narayana story we see two ascetics in conversation under a tree, the symbol of a hermitage or *asrama*. The figure on the left is Nara, a partly divine sage, and the other is Narayana, identified with the god Vishnu. Both have their long, matted hair elaborately arranged and wear garments. Nara is shown slightly obese, common among Indian ascetic images, while Narayana is represented as emaciated, though not to the extent seen at Harwan. The Buddhists often portray ascetics, usually in a narrative context of a group being converted by the Buddha's greater wisdom. When portrayed alone, the solitary individual is often shown beside a thatched hut.[32] There are many terracotta images of ascetics from Central Asian Buddhist sites, where they are shown in a variety of poses, wearing garments, and with exaggerated features to emphasize their contrast with other figures.[33] Examples of extreme asceticism are rare, as the Buddha renounced this means to Enlightenment as excessive. Only in the north-western or Gandharan region is this emaciated type of image often found and here it denotes a particular episode from the life of the Buddha, when he exercised extreme physical denial in his own search for the truth. This dramatic image serves, therefore, to warn against such extreme practices. Among Jain images one finds numerous portrayals of naked, meditating figures, but the figures are never shown as emaciated. Seated Jain images differ only slightly from their Buddhist counterparts, primarily in their nudity. Although the Jain practice involved slow starvation while meditating, it is interesting that emaciated ascetics play no role in their imagery. There is no mention of the existence of Jainism in Kalhana's chronicle and no Jain images have been discovered from Kashmir. *Fig. 16*

A rare example of an ascetic exhibiting something of the intensity and emaciation of the Harwan figures is found in an unidentified Gupta terracotta fragment. Of unknown provenance and clearly broken away from a larger panel, this remarkable naked figure with flowing hair and gaunt torso and with a look of fear expressed by the gaping mouth and bulging eyes, seems to be running (or flying) from the flames behind. In our search for images comparable with those from Harwan, this figure, though in a different pose, may be closest in feeling and spirit. *Fig. 17*

Since the ascetic figures at Harwan do not readily match the usual types found in Hindu, Buddhist or Jain establishments, we may be advised to look elsewhere for answers. Contemporary with the founding of Jainism and a century before Buddhism began there existed another

ascetic sect known as the Ajivikas. Their founder, Gosala, spent several years in the company of the Jain leader Mahavira and the two sects shared many attitudes and practices. The Ajivikas have left no written records and our information about them comes primarily from the seldom flattering reports in Jain and Buddhist chronicles. These indicate that the Ajivikas were active, in most areas of India, until late medieval times, finally to be absorbed into the Indian mainstream like numerous other cults.[34]

Because of their often unorthodox practices such as nudity, extreme yogic habits and bodily abuses, the Ajivikas were not destined for widespread support. They did, however, manage to establish a religious system based upon their fatalistic belief that man is not the master of his fate, that no amount of good deeds or accumulated karma could alter the inevitable process all must endure:

> Our words and deeds, that is to say, announce to ourselves—and to the world—every minute, just what milestone we have come to. Thus perfect asceticism, though it has no causative, has yet a symptomatic value: it is the characteristic mode of life of a being who is on the point of reaching the goal of isolation (*kaivalya*); and conversely, those who are not readily drawn to it are comparatively low in the human scale. Any pronounced inability to conform to the most advanced ascetic standards simply proclaims how woefully far one stands from the summit of the cosmic social climb.[35]

No images and no monuments of the Ajivikas beyond a few inscriptions upon cave entrances, are known to have survived. They must have produced something but their gradual decline and the Indian practice of sects occupying sites of earlier cults served to eradicate any remains. A summary of the scant evidence available, mostly from Basham's thorough study, does enable one to draw certain conclusions about Ajivika practices which may throw some light upon the significance of the Harwan site.

14. Seated figure of ascetic, India; third-first century BC; terracotta; 8.2 cm. Collection of Dr. Bertram Schaffner, on loan to The Brooklyn Museum, New York.

15. Emaciated figure, Iraq; Babylonian (Larsa), *c.* nineteenth century BC; bronze; 14.9 cm. Cincinnati Art Museum, John J. Emery Fund. (*opposite page*).

Asokan inscriptions upon cave entrances in Barabar, Bihar and dating from the third century BC, indicate early sympathy for the Ajivikas and at the imperial level. Three of these caves (Lomas Rishi, Sudama and Visvamitra) are of unusual shape: apsidal in plan with a circular construction at the far end. If Buddhist, this arrangement would indicate the presence of a circular stupa. According to Basham, these caves may originally have been stone replicas of the earliest Ajivika meeting place, a circular thatched hut at the end of a courtyard.[36] There is ample evidence that these caves were later used by Hindus, Buddhists and even Muslims with attendant defacements and added inscriptions. It is of interest to note that when Cunningham inspected the caves in the nineteenth century, vast quantities of broken pottery littered the floors, to a depth of nearly one metre. The Ajivikas were believed to have practised severe austerities inside clay pots and in much of the literature they are associated with potters. A potter hosted Gosala for sixteen years and there seems little doubt that many early members of the sect were potters by trade. The Ajivikas were known to adopt " . . . a squatting posture . . ." for some of their extreme practices, encouraged nudity, allowed their hair to grow long and carried a lotus while begging.[37]

Basham also devotes a section to the evidence of Ajivika activity within Kashmir.[38] He notes that some of Kalhana's references to various religious groups agree with known Ajivika practices and in such descriptions as " . . . strange and naked ascetics . . ." and " . . . crippled and naked ascetics . . ." he finds possible allusions to the Ajivikas. The tenth-century Kashmiri ruler, Harsha, is described as an iconoclast who directed the destruction

16. The sages Nara and Narayana
Uttar Pradesh; fifth century;
red terracotta; 57.2 cm.
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lenart.

and defilement of images, actually carried out by individuals who could have been Ajivikas, according to Basham. There is no question that ascetics of various sects migrated from other parts of India to Kashmir and among those cults could well have been the Ajivikas.

If one now reviews the remains at Harwan in the light of what is known of Ajivika beliefs and practices, the usual assumption of a Buddhist origin for the site is less tenable. Even Kalhana's reference to the Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna residing there could be interpreted as a reoccupation of an earlier monastic establishment. It is clear from Kak's excavation reports that the terracotta tiles surrounding the Buddhist stupa on the lower terrace were taken from the pavement above. They were so broken and poorly aligned as to indicate that the Buddhists had simply climbed the short distance up the hill to secure ready-made paving tiles. The shape of the apsidal temple at Harwan agrees with the design of the caves dedicated to the Ajivikas at Barabar, discussed above. There is no way to determine how the circular structure at the far end was used, but it would be imprudent to assume that it must have been a Buddhist stupa. Among the pavement tiles appear several images which were also popular with the Ajivikas: the elephant (the "last sprinkling elephant" was one of their eight finalities), and the abundance of flowers (the Ajivikas were said to adorn the hermitage, and the peculiar figures on the balcony hold flowers). Moreover, the extensive use of terracotta may also indicate an Ajivika association, for the sect was closely associated with the community of potters. The ascetic plaques provide additional evidence. The geese below may refer to ascetics in general, for these wandering figures are sometimes called wild geese or swans, *hamsa,* because of their migratory habits, especially from southern areas into the Himalayas. The figure of the ascetic agrees in nearly every respect with descriptions of the Ajivika: emaciation, long hair, nudity and the squatting posture can all be found in various texts. Only the sometimes mentioned rod or staff is absent:

> . . . we may envisage the typical Ajivika of the early period as usually completely naked, no doubt covered with dust and dirt, perhaps bent and crippled, and armed with a bamboo staff.[39]

One might look once again at this figure in terms of one of the Ajivikas' best-known practices, that of doing extreme penance inside a clay jar. The confined posture neatly conforms to what an individual would look like if inside such a container.

17. Flying (?) figure, India; Gupta period, *c.* fifth century; terracotta. Private Collection.

The enigma of Harwan still remains. Except for the ascetic plaques everything found there is compatible with known Buddhist practices. However, the one certain Buddhist area, the lower terrace with its stupa, included pavement tiles clearly borrowed from the establishment above, indicating that someone occupied the location prior to the Buddhists' arrival. Although no firm evidence of Ajivika activity in Kashmir is known, the apsidal shrine, various motifs upon the tiles and the emaciated ascetics agree with their known practices. The early date, confirmed by the Kharoshthi inscriptions, is consistent with the evidence found at the early Ajivika caves in Bihar and the Ajivikas' association with potters is affirmed by the extensive use of terracotta at Harwan. It is an intriguing idea to think of Harwan as having been occupied originally by Ajivikas who had either deserted the site or were displaced by the Buddhists, leaving behind evidence of their activities, all of which was easily incorporated by the Buddhists, except for the ascetic tiles.

NOTES

1. M. A. Stein, trans., *Kalhana's Rajatarangini: A Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir* (Delhi, 1961), vol. I, verse 173 (hereafter referred to as R.T., I, 173).
2. R. C. Kak, *Handbook of the Archaeological and Numismatic Sections of the Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and Co., 1923), pp. 110-115.
3. R. C. Kak, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir* (London, 1933), pp. 105-111 and pls. XV-XLII.
4. A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (New York, 1927), p. 141.
5. Mr. Willy Frei, Zurich, has had his Harwan plaque tested and found it to be between 1,350 and 1,850 years old, or between the second and sixth centuries AD.
6. Noted by P. G. Paul, *Early Sculpture of Kashmir* (Leiden, 1986), pp. 48ff.
7. I am most grateful to Dr. Trudy Kawami who pointed out this and other comparative material, especially regarding Parthian influences.
8. H. Frankfort, *Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (Baltimore, 1970), p. 150.
9. O. Ferrari, "Floorings," *The Encyclopedia of World Art,* vol. XIII (New York, 1967), p. 475.
10. C. M. Havelock, *Hellenistic Art,* 2nd ed. (New York, 1981), p. 244.
11. Ferrari, op. cit., p. 477.
12. M. A. R. Colledge, *Parthian Art* (Ithaca, 1977), p. 25.
13. M. I. Rostovtzeff, "Dura and the Problem of Parthian Art," *Yale Classical Studies,* vol. V (1935), fig. 32.
14. A. von Le Coq, *Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan* (London, 1928), p. 61.
15. *Kaogu* (1978), no. 6, pp. 380-387 (in Chinese).
16. *5000 Years of Korean Art* (San Francisco, 1979), figs. 65, 66.
17. J. Marshall, *Taxila* (Delhi, 1975), I: 393.
18. D. Faccenna, *Sculptures From the Sacred Area of Butkara I* (Rome, 1962), vol. II, 2, pl. IV.
19. J. Irwin, "The Stupa and the Cosmic Axis," *South Asian Archaeology, 1977* (Naples, 1979), fig. 22. Robert Skelton, former Keeper at the Victoria and Albert Museum, very kindly pointed out these tiles and suggested their similarity to Harwan.
20. M. H. Makhdoomi, "Ancient Buddhist Site Discovered at Lidroo, Pahalgam," (press release, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, July 25, 1978).
21. Colledge, op. cit., p. 25.
22. Rostovtzeff, op. cit., p. 231.
23. A. Belenitsky, *Central Asia* (Cleveland and New York), p. 100.
24. Belenitsky, op. cit., p. 153 and G. Pugachenkova, *Istoria iskusstu Uzbekistan* (Moscow, 1965), pls. 10-13, 162 (in Russian).
25. E. J. Keall, "Qal 'eh-i Yazdigird: The Question of its Date," *Iran,* (1977), vol. XV, pl. IIIb, another Parthian source kindly suggested by Dr. Trudy Kawami.
26. D. Schlumberger, "The Excavations at Surkh Kotal and the Problem of Hellenism in Bactria and India," *Proceedings of the British Academy,* XLVII (London, 1961), pp. 77-95.
27. First brought to my attention by Dr. Robert Brown of U.C.L.A., see Sotheby's, *Catalogue of Tibetan, Nepalese, Kashmir Art* (London: July 9, 1979), pl. XXXV.
28. I am grateful to Mr. Willy Frei, Zurich, for this observation.
29. Kak, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir* (London, 1933), pl. XXII.
30. P. Shah, *Visnudharmottara-Purana,* Third Khanda (Baroda, 1961), II: 48.
31. *Todalatantram,* 2: 17-18, as translated by Dr. P. Pal who kindly suggested this passage for its similarity to the Harwan figures.
32. H. Ingholt, *Gandharan Art in Pakistan* (Hamden, 1971), pls. 54, 82-86.
33. Mission Paul Pelliot, *Tumchouq: Planches* (Paris, 1961), pls. 171, 434.
34. Most of our information about the Ajivikas comes from the detailed study by A. L. Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ajivikas* (London, 1951).
35. H. Zimmer, *Philosophies of India* (Princeton, 1969), p. 267.
36. Basham, op. cit., pp. 150-160.
37. Basham, ibid., pp. 110-111.
38. Basham, ibid., pp. 205-212.
39. Basham, ibid., p. 109.

□

Buddhist Architecture

Robert E. Fisher

Prior to the process of Islamization that began in the fourteenth century in Kashmir, both Hinduism and Buddhism had flourished there for almost two thousand years. Today, the remnants of a few Hindu temples survive and Buddhist monuments are so fragmentary that their original forms must be completely reconstructed from other evidence. Even during Kalhana's time in the twelfth century, Buddhist monuments were few compared to the Hindu temples that were still in worship.

The destruction of Buddhist establishments was begun by zealous Hindu kings, such as Harsha who destroyed many of the eighth-century Buddhist monuments of Parihasapura during civil strife in AD 1100, as well as by others who used cut stones from Buddhist monuments to build Hindu temples, and was continued by iconoclastic Muslim rulers in the fourteenth century and thereafter. During the past seven centuries, when Buddhism disappeared altogether and Hinduism barely survived, nature's gradual erosion added to the neglected temples, causing further decay and leaving modern visitors with but a glimpse of Kashmir's former architectural grandeur.

The Stupa

The most familiar Buddhist monument is the stupa and even though no architectural example survives, its importance and distinctive form can be determined from literature and from artistic evidence. Kalhana's chronicle mentions the construction of several stupas at various locations in the Valley by the third century BC by the Mauryan emperor Asoka. Later, Meghavahana, ruling around the middle of the fourth century, is cited by Kalhana as being responsible for the construction of at least one well-known stupa. It is of interest that Meghavahana is said to have come to Kashmir from either Tibet or Ladakh, and these areas were to carry on the traditional style of stupa architecture developed in Kashmir. Unfortunately, nothing is known of the appearance of this or other early stupas. Meghavahana is credited with numerous other donations and he and his queens are associated with several Buddhist monuments, especially viharas. Kalhana also mentions Lalitaditya's Buddhist monuments, notably the vihara and stupa at Ushkur and the great stupa erected at Parihasapura by his minister Chankuna, all of which were most probably seen by him. The stupas reputed to be from Asoka's time were no doubt reconstructed several times before Kalhana saw them, and retained little of their original design.

Other literary records include references by various Chinese visitors, who have left accounts from at least as early as the fifth century.[1] Although it would appear that most of the Chinese pilgrims travelling to India by way of Central Asia visited Kashmir, only the records of a few

give any details of the Buddhist establishments existing there. The report of the best known of the Chinese visitors, Hsuan Tsang, is the most detailed chronicle before Kalhana, though very little about stupas is included. He mentions four stupas built by Asoka, each containing " . . . a pint measure of relics of Tathagata." The story of Hsuan Tsang's trip, as told by the shaman Hwui Li, referring to these same stupas, notes their " . . . wonderful height and great magnificence."[2] The eighth-century visitor, Ou K'ong, spent more time in Kashmir, but his chronicle contains fewer details about either the Buddhists or their monuments than does the record of his illustrious predecessor, though he does refer to large numbers of stupas and images in the valley.[3] Subsequent reports by visitors do not mention Buddhist remains beyond brief asides, such as Growse, referring to Ushkur, in 1872: ". . . the remains of a Buddhist stupa, erected at a much later period by King Lalitaditya, may still be seen there."[4] The Archaeological reports, published early in this century, are able only to offer diagrams of stupa foundations and photographs of ruins. In fact, due to some restoration carried out in the last seventy-five years, the few foundations that can be seen today are probably in better condition than they were at any time in the past one thousand years.

Curiously, one early Hindu text, dating probably from the sixth or seventh century at the latest, provides descriptive information about the Kashmir stupa. The text is the *Vishnudharmottarapurana,* which was compiled in Kashmir or the north-west. In a section titled "aiduka" is a detailed description of the stupa, closely matching that seen on the small plaques discovered at Harwan. The inclusion of a Buddhist monument in a Hindu text and the use of the name "aiduka" instead of stupa has been explained at length.[5] According to the *Vishnudharmottara,* the base of a stupa should consist of a triple platform, called *bhadrapitha,* with four stairways, one for each of the four directions. Above this base is the middle section, called *dhruva,* with four sides. Atop this section are to be thirteen tiers, called *bhumikas.* The entire structure is crowned with an *amalasaraka* and it is decorated with a medallion. In the middle section should be four guardians (*lokapalas*), each carrying a staff or lance. They are armoured and dressed in the northern mode. The text goes on to tie all these to Siva worship, but as has been shown, what is described is clearly the Buddhist stupa, and if one compares that description to the images of stupas found at Harwan as well as to some of the extant bronze votive models, the parallels are remarkable.

Fig. 1 The oldest remaining evidence of the complete Kashmiri stupa is found upon the small, terracotta votive plaques discovered at Harwan. Three were published by Kak in 1933,[6] and a drawing based upon them appeared in a later publication.[7] According to Kak, there remains an inscription in Brahmi characters of about the fourth century, stamped in relief below the stupa, consisting of the usual honorific phrase praising the faith. Another similar plaque in the Sri
Fig. 2 Pratap Singh Museum in Srinagar belongs with this group. Also in that museum is a slightly different version, of stone, consisting of a seated Buddha flanked by attenuated versions of the same stupa.

None of the plaques was excavated under controlled conditions; they were found, along with numerous terracotta fragments of statuary, about the Harwan site as the process of discovery progressed. It is of interest that the script used was Brahmi, while the characters on the Harwan tiles from the same site were in the earlier Kharoshthi.

The stupa represented on these plaques consists of three recessed platforms (*medhi*), with a distinct decorative moulding around each. A continuous flight of stairs ascends through all three levels to the main platform. Due to the sculptures' low relief, it is not possible to determine whether or not such stairways were found on the other three sides. The one existing stupa foundation, at Harwan, appears to have but one flight of stairs, while other monuments, at Ushkur and Parihasapura, had four, as do various votive bronzes from Gandhara and Kashmir, discussed below. At each corner of the platform, on some of the plaques, are two large, free-standing columns. These are no doubt a lingering tradition from Asokan times, the well-known Asokan columns found with Buddhist monuments throughout India. The size and prominence given the columns indicate their importance. To date, no evidence of Asokan columns has been found at any Kashmiri Buddhist site.

The hemispherical stupa proper (*anda*) is circled with several horizontal bands, with decorative elements visible between two of them. These are most likely niches with figures inside, as found often in Gandharan monuments, fragments of which were found about the area of the Harwan site. The upper third of the dome is left plain and the top supports a number of struts, which in turn are surmounted with a series of circular umbrellas (*chhatravali*) of diminishing size. These are separated from one another by more such struts and culminate in a point from which fly several streamers. The design of the struts and umbrellas indicates

wooden construction, as does the extreme height, exactly half of the entire monument. The number of umbrellas seems to be either eleven or thirteen, both canonically correct.

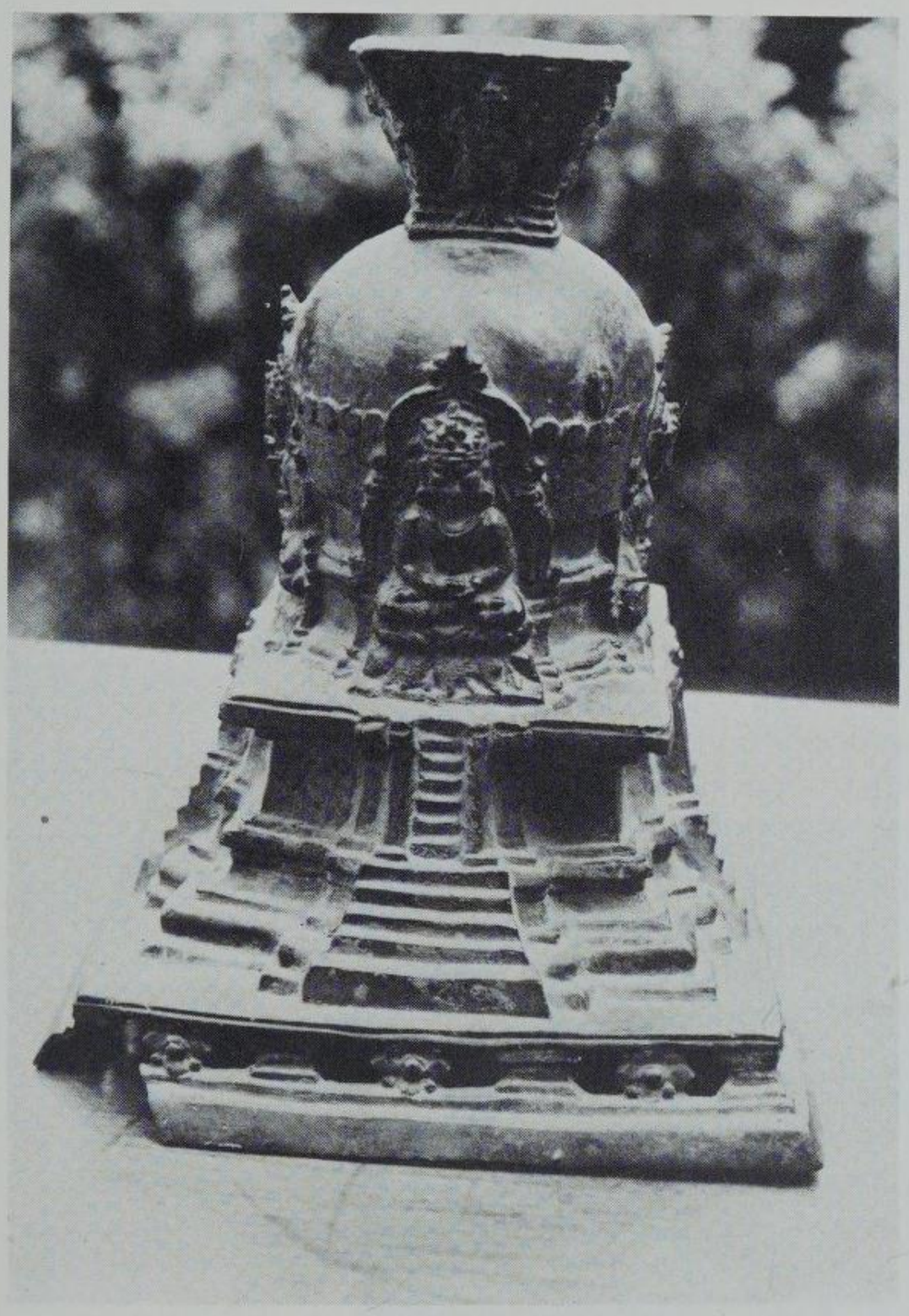
The type of stupa found on the Harwan plaques and repeated in the ruined foundations at Harwan, Ushkur and Parihasapura is also known in votive models from the adjacent Gandharan region, and similar examples, in bronze and stone, are found today in museums and temples across Asia. In the Peshawar Museum are several such replicas, in bronze, all similar to those found on the Harwan plaques. One is especially close, differing only in minor respects: *Fig. 3* a double instead of a triple base and lacking the columns (although they are not present on all Kashmiri models either). The top appears to be damaged, accounting for only five umbrellas. Other bronze models share these same characteristics, including the free-standing pillars and even stylized versions of the streamers, reduced in size due to the limitations of the material.

Some of these votive stupas also differ from the Harwan plaques in the inclusion of figures. On one there is a seated image, rendered in the Kashmiri style, on each of the four sides of *Fig. 4* the drum. Only three are visible in the photograph but the different hand gestures (*mudras*) suggest that each of the four represents a Buddha in the manner of the Mahayana concept of the transcendent Buddha, with a different form for each of the four directions. This mandala-like arrangement is found on another of the Gandharan votive stupas but the four Buddhas are shown with the same gesture of meditation. This arrangement, of the stupa with four identical seated images of the Buddha, can be found at least as far back as Kushan times and is even considered by some scholars to have originated in the north-west and Kashmir.[8] Furthermore, some of the Gandharan bronze stupas also include additional figures. In one example, especially close to the Harwan plaques in the details of the stupa itself, there are four figures standing *Fig. 5* atop the dome, between the struts that support the umbrellas. These figures, dressed in the costume of the north-west, are identical, each holding a long lance. They may be identified as guardians, or *lokapalas,* as mentioned in the description of *aiduka* in the *Vishnudharmottarapurana.* According to that document, the *lokapalas* should carry a spear (*sula*), be dressed in armour and correspond to the four directions. The text points specifically to the northern dress of the guardians, and the images shown on this stupa are clearly so arrayed. About the base of this stupa are several figures in postures of devotion, no doubt meant to portray donors, and one standing figure with a club or stick held at the shoulder. At his feet is a sheep or a goat. Such figures about the base of bronze images are commonly found in Kashmiri works of the eighth-tenth century. In one such bronze, attributed to the eighth or ninth century, are found two *Fig. 7*

1. Plaque with stupa, from Harwan; terracotta. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar. (*left*).

2. Plaque with stupa, Kashmir; stone. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar. (*right*).

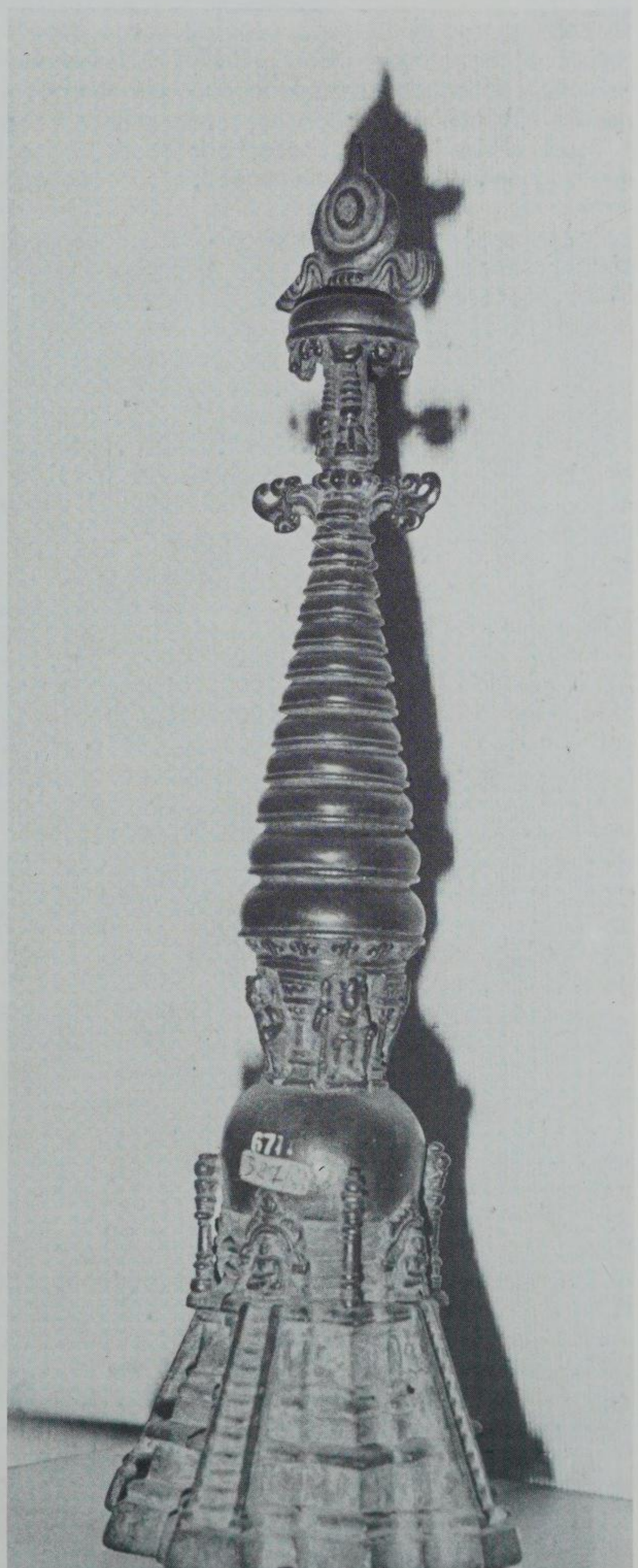
3. Votive stupa, Gandhara; bronze. Peshawar Museum.



4. Votive stupa with four Buddhas, Gandhara; bronze.
Peshawar Museum.

6. Jain stupa, Mathura; stone relief.

5. Votive stupa with four *lokapalas*, Gandhara; bronze.
Peshawar Museum.



stupas, complete with triple terrace, four stairways, four corner columns, a seated image and the thirteen umbrellas. Although the guardians are absent, the donors and devotional figures about the base are shown in foreign dress. The few votive models shown here along with the literary record of the *Vishnudharmottara* make it possible to reconstruct the Kashmiri stupa, despite the paucity of architectural remains. The small number of Kashmiri ruins agree in all respects with the models and there is nothing to suggest that their missing upper portions did not look like those on the plaques and votive bronzes.

The Kashmiri stupa was a towering edifice, quite different from the stupa known in most other parts of India, due mainly to the emphasis upon the umbrellas and the multi-tiered base or platforms. This meant a reduction in the size of the drum as it was dominated by the upper and lower portions. The Kashmiri stupa often featured the use of free-standing columns, at each corner of the top terrace, and these were topped by animals just as were the famous Asokan columns. Some examples included images inside niches, usually four in number, sometimes with varied gestures. At least one example featured guardians in northern dress, exactly as prescribed in the *Vishnudharmottara.*[9]

Reliefs of stupas with these same features are also known from Gandhara and from at least
Fig. 6 one example from the Mathura region exists. The latter (actually a Jain stupa) follows a similar arrangement with free-standing pillars and a stairway situated upon a raised platform. The body of the stupa proper is closer to the type found at other sites in India, such as Sanchi, and the elaborate umbrellas, so popular in Gandhara and Kashmir, are reduced to only one, above the *harmika,* with garlands flying to each side. This stupa can be dated to the first or second century AD, making it earlier than any known Gandharan or Kashmiri remains.

It is thus still difficult to determine whether the design of the Kashmir stupa originated in Kashmir, Gandhara or even Mathura. Certainly the evidence of the Kashmiri votive plaques, which are earlier than the Gandharan bronze examples, indicates a probable Kashmiri origin. In any event, this type of stupa with its distinctive stairways and crowning elements of a tower-like configuration of umbrellas, enjoyed a long life in the north-western regions of the subcontinent and remained a model for stupas in Tibet and the pagoda style in Central and East Asia.

Ushkur and Parihasapura

Apart from Harwan, the only Buddhist remains of archaeological value in Kashmir are at Ushkur and Parihasapura. Both are associated with the eighth-century Karkota ruler Lalitaditya and are located in the same general area of the Valley. At Parihasapura, only the ruined foundations of three structures are left from what was once a considerable secular and religious complex. Likewise at Ushkur all that is visible are foundations, though future excavations may well turn up a greater number of remains, as the immediate area is yet to be fully explored and the terrain suggests the presence of other constructions. Despite the ruinous condition of both sites, enough exists to add considerable information to the history of Kashmiri Buddhist architecture, including evidence of the creation of a new, composite structure where the traditionally separate buildings used for worship (*chaityas*—halls) and residences for monks (viharas) are joined into one.

According to Kalhana, Ushkur was founded during Kushan times by the Turushka king Huvishka, and named Hushkapura. Cunningham identified this town as the modern day Ushkur, close by the larger Baramula, and Stein, agreeing with Cunningham, listed the records of various travellers whose visits there proved the importance of the place as an early stop upon entering the Valley as well as a religious centre of some consequence. Hsuan Tsang spent his first night in Kashmir there and later the eleventh-century visitor Alberuni, calling it Ushkara, noted its proximity to Baramula. The Chinese Ou-K'ong reported a vihara there in AD 759 and Kalhana described a number of Hindu monuments erected in the immediate area,
Fig. 8 though little of their presence has yet been discovered. The only monument visible today, of which just portions of the foundations remain, appears to be a stupa of cruciform plan. However, Hsuan Tsang mentions spending the night at a temple, after visiting the several monasteries at Ushkur,[10] but says nothing about a stupa. Kalhana alludes to a great vihara built by Lalitaditya but does not give the name or exact location. This vihara, according to Stein, may well be the "Moung-ti-wei-houo-lo" noted by Ou-K'ong who visited the site shortly after the eighth-century rule of Lalitaditya. Kalhana also relates the story of Lalitaditya erecting a large stupa at Ushkur. There seems little doubt that Lalitaditya erected his stupa over the

remains of an earlier monument and by adding what may have been monks' cells into the surrounding wall he created a composite structure. The stupa was thus moved inside the vihara, occupying the centre position and thereby creating a temple, of the sort later found in Kashmiri Hindu monuments, with the central shrine and courtyard surrounded by arcaded walls, otherwise unknown among the few Buddhist remains.

The base of the Ushkur stupa/temple is cruciform in plan, with stairs on each of the four sides, each side being nearly thirty-three metres across. A torus still exists about the plinth, but the rest of the stonework has disappeared. Sections of the plinth, between the stairs, consist of angular projections in the manner of other Kashmiri stupas, such as at Parihasapura. This type, less common than the single stairway model, is known from only one site in Gandhara, at Bhamala near Taxila. The ruinous condition of the Ushkur remains prevents further comparison, such as of the presence of rows of cells that once may have been built into it. *Fig. 8* *Fig. 9*

This configuration, featuring the four stairs, high plinth and cells built into the enclosure, constitutes a distinct, regional type. It is seldom found on the Indian subcontinent, where the single stairway and circular-plinth types dominate. Some similarity can be found in the late eighth-century eastern India Buddhist vihara at Paharpur, which does use this type of platform, but this is not typical, and the Paharpur platform, with its small shrines attached,

7. Votive stupa, Kashmir; eighth-ninth century; brass. The Asia Society, New York, Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection.

is different from any found in Kashmir. The geographically closest parallel (in addition to the Taxila site of Bhamala) is found in the nearby Central Asian site of Khotan. The Rawak
Fig. 10 vihara, dated to the fourth or fifth century, exhibits the same structural features, and Stein's early explorations clearly showed cells built within the surrounding wall, just as Kak proposed for Ushkur.[11] The dates of the Rawak vihara, Bhamala and Ushkur are all roughly the same. Along with other such monuments found in Central Asia and Afghanistan, Ushkur (and the Harwan votive plaques) reflects a new direction in the development of Buddhist architecture in the north-west.

This development probably began in Gandhara and most likely coincided with the increased growth of the Mahayana schools. It consisted of the erection of a cruciform temple, or possibly a stupa, inside the vihara compound. This shrine was elevated, often upon a triple, recessed platform, and utilized a stairway on each of four sides. It was never widely adopted in Gandhara but became popular in what Sarkar calls the "Trans-Indus" regions.[12] That would include Kashmir along with Central Asia and Afghanistan. The type continued in Ladakh and Tibet long after Buddhism had disappeared from the other areas, and is remarkably close to monuments in South-east Asia.

If Ushkur belongs to this late development in the history of Buddhist architecture, and further excavations may hold the answer, then a date of the seventh-eighth century would seem appropriate. Excavations may also determine if this design was original with Lalitaditya's building or already present with the foundations over which his monument was erected, foundations that probably date from Kushan times.

Parihasapura, modern Paraspora, is located about twenty-two kilometres north-west of Srinagar, on a plateau, near the centre of the Valley. The ruins of three monuments—a stupa, a vihara and a *chaitya*—are all that remain of Lalitaditya's former capital. Records mention Hindu monuments of great size but only the ruined Buddhist foundations are left. According to Kalhana, each of the three was once surrounded by a wall, characteristic of Lalitaditya's Buddhist and Hindu monuments, and noted at Ushkur.

The decay of the site began immediately after Lalitaditya's rule. His son moved the capital away, Avantivarman (ruled AD 855-883) diverted the river and finally King Samkaravarman (AD 883-902) used stones from the site to build his own temples at nearby Patan. Still, something remained as late as the eleventh century, for Kalhana tells of influential religious leaders from there during the early eleventh-century reign of Samgramaraja, and of a colossal Buddha image, probably in the Rajavihara. The destruction of sacred shrines by Harsha (AD 1089-1101) was felt at Parihasapura when he destroyed the Rajavihara. The final destruction came at the hands of the Muslims after the fourteenth century. As late as the eighteenth century, travellers' reports speak of large remains, indicating that the monuments still retained something of their grandeur clear into modern times. No doubt local inhabitants further reduced the site for needed building materials.

8. Ushkur stupa (detail).

The largest of the three monuments is the stupa. This structure has been known as Chankuna's stupa, from a passage in Kalhana's history linking its construction to Lalitaditya's Tokharian minister, an avid supporter of Buddhism. In the centre rests a huge stone, with a one-and-a-half-metre deep hole in the middle, probably the base for the stupa finial. In all respects the foundation and four stairways are similar to the Ushkur remains, though larger and still retaining portions of the second platform. The torus is repeated at each level giving the plinth a majestic silhouette, a hallmark of Kashmiri structures, found also on the small, votive bronzes. Several stone sculptures recovered from this site have been removed to the Sri Pratap Singh Museum but one seated image, inside a niche, remains at the site. *Fig. 11* *Fig. 12*

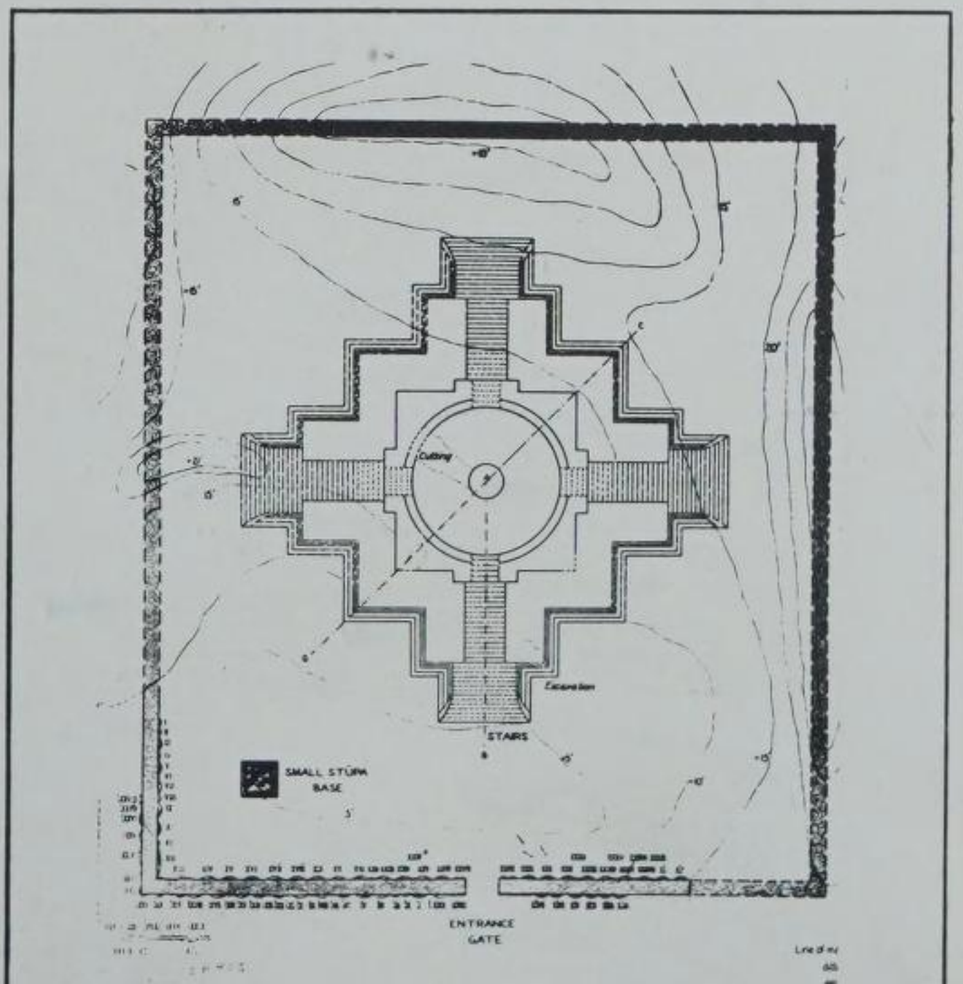
It is difficult to reconstruct the manner in which these few figures might have been placed on the stupa. Probably the seated, meditating Buddha in a trefoil niche was part of a continuous frieze about the base of the stupa, a common practice in Gandhara. Likewise, the standing, crowned Buddha, an iconographic type of interest, and the so-called "atlante" figure, belong to rows of similar images that adorned the plinth of the stupa. The use of figures upon the surface of a stupa was common practice, but certain features of these figures set them apart. The standing image, with both arms upraised, is noticeably different in style from its Gandharan prototypes, especially in the naturalistic modelling of the torso and the presence of the garland falling below the knees. These features are typical of the Kashmiri style, seen most often on bronzes and later Hindu stone images. The unusual crowned Buddha has close parallels, in the treatment of the crown, from Central Asia[13] and China, especially at Yun Kang,[14] which is certainly of earlier date. These Central Asian and Chinese features add further support to Sarkar's linking of architecture of the north-west with the further "Trans-Indus" regions. The stupa was once surrounded by a wall, and this, along with the recessed plinth and four stairways, ties it closely to the contemporary remains at Ushkur, described above.

Next to Chankuna's stupa there is a smaller ruin that was once a vihara. Twenty-six cells, fronted with a veranda, surround an open courtyard, with the cell in the centre of the back row larger than the rest, probably for use as a shrine. The plinth carries the same torus found on the other monuments. Evidence of a drain and a water reservoir have been found and some of the walls show signs of repair. This traditional Indian type of vihara, the only one left in Kashmir, is probably the one Kalhana mentions as being erected by Lalitaditya and called the Rajavihara: "That king, who was free from passions, built the ever-rich Rajavihara, with a large quadrangle (*catuhsala*), a large *chaitya*, and a large [image of] the Jina (Buddha)."[15] *Fig. 13*

The third structure is the large *chaitya* mentioned above. The square chamber is eight metres on a side and is surrounded by a circumambulatory passage (*pradaksinapatha*). The bases of four stone columns remain and the roof was probably of the pyramidal type still found on Kashmiri Hindu temples. Pieces of the cornice, a string of stylized *kirtimukhas*, can be found lying about the area. The inner chamber contains a single block of stone, 35.6 x 30.5 x 15.2 cm., upon which the main image must have stood. "Atlante" figures, similar to those from the Chankuna stupa, were also found nearby. *Fig. 14*

One realizes the importance of this structure when it is compared with the Ushkur, Bhamala and Rawak monuments noted above. It belongs to that late Buddhist tradition where the *chaitya* is joined with the vihara, and is the best example of that arrangement in Kashmir.

9. Bhamala stupa, Gandhara.



10. Diagram of Rawak vihara, Khotan. (After Stein, *Ancient Khotan* [New York, 1975], pl. XL).

11. Chankuna stupa, Parihasapura.

12. Chankuna stupa (detail), Parihasapura.

13. Rajavihara, Parihasapura.

14. Chaitya, Parihasapura.

A cruciform, terraced structure, surrounded by monks' cells, was furthermore known in Hindu monuments, many of which remain in Kashmir itself, and reached its most elaborate development in the temples of South-east Asia, especially in Cambodia. This structure is similar in concept to the temple/stupa at Ushkur. There, the object to be venerated, the stupa, is moved inside the residential compound, the vihara, creating a new focus for that older structure. At Parihasapura it appears that the vihara contains a shrine, the *chaitya*, in place of the stupa, but the basic arrangement is the same. Both constructions represent a later phase of Buddhist architecture, one seldom found in the rest of India due mainly to the decline of Buddhism by the seventh-eighth century. In fact, the cruciform, terraced structure surrounded by monks' cells is found frequently in Kashmiri Hindu monuments. Nevertheless, it most likely was first developed among Buddhist monastic establishments, such as Ushkur and Parihasapura, and later adopted for Hindu shrines. The ultimate source is probably the various Gandharan Buddhist monuments, from which so much of Kashmiri architecture derives, that had long featured the concept of the stupa within a courtyard.

NOTES

1. Chinese pilgrims were reported already visiting sacred spots in northern India by the third century AD, Samuel Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World of Hsuan Tsang*, (London, n.d.), p. x and P. C. Bagchi, *India and China*, 2nd ed. (Westport, 1973), p. 60, but the earliest written account of those travels is by Fa-Hsian (399-414), see G. Legge, *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms* (New York, 1965).
2. Shaman Hwui Li, *The Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, translated by S. Beal (New Delhi, 1973), p. 68.
3. N. Dutt, *Gilgit Manuscripts* (Calcutta: Oriental Press, 1939), 1:37.
4. F. S. Growse, "The Architecture of Kashmir," *Calcutta Review*, LIV, no. CVII (January, 1872), p. 28.
5. P. Pal, "The Aiduka of the Visnudharmottarapurana and Certain Aspects of Stupa Symbolism," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, n.s., IV, pt. 1, pp. 49-62.
6. R. C. Kak, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir* (1933; reprint, New Delhi: Sagar Publications, 1971), pl. XVIII.
7. J. Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans* (Los Angeles and Berkeley, 1967), p. 36.
8. D. Snellgrove, *Image of the Buddha* (Tokyo, 1978), p. 137.
9. A similar representation, with the four lance-bearing guardians, in northern dress, belonging to the late Professor G. Tucci, is on view in the Oriental Museum in Rome.
10. S. Beal, *The Life of Hiuen-Tsiang by the Shaman Hwui-Li* (London, 1911), p. 68.
11. Aurel Stein, *Ancient Khotan* (New York, 1975), pl. XL and Kak, op. cit., p. 154.
12. H. Sarkar, *Studies in Early Buddhist Architecture of India* (New Delhi, 1966), p. 66.
13. M. Bussagli, *Painting in Central Asia* (Geneva, 1963), p. 81.
14. T. Akiyama and S. Matsubara, *Arts of China: Buddhist Cave Temples* (Tokyo, 1969), pl. 103.
15. M. A. Stein, trans., *Kalhana's Rajatarangini: A Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir* (Delhi, 1961), IV, 200.

□

Stone Temples

Robert E. Fisher

Of all the artistic remains in Kashmir, none is more distinctive than the stone temple. The typical Kashmiri temple exhibits a unique blend of foreign styles and native creativity that resulted in an architectural tradition notably different from others on the subcontinent.

All the surviving stone temples are Hindu but there can be little doubt that the Buddhist temples were also built in the same style. In fact, many fundamental elements of Kashmiri Hindu temples probably derive from the earlier Buddhist models. In addition, foreign styles, which filtered through West Asia, played a major role in the development of Kashmiri stone architecture. Further, Kashmiri builders worked with massive stones, larger than those typically found throughout the rest of India. Kashmir's extant stone temples were all created in less than a millennium. The earliest remains cannot be dated before the fourth or fifth century AD and it appears that no stone temples were built after the fourteenth century.

With the paucity of temple remains, literary references are of some help, if used with caution. For example, Kalhana's claim of pre-Asokan Kashmiri viharas is unlikely considering that Buddhism was not introduced into Kashmir before Asoka's time, in the third century BC.[1] Kalhana also cites the ". . .eighty-four lakhs of stone-buildings. . ." erected by one King Lava, also called a Buddhist, yet active before the arrival of Asokan Buddhism.[2] One plausible aspect of the early period that does emerge from the various literary sources, however, is the close connection between Kashmir and the area to the west, Gandhara. Beginning at least with the Achaemenian Persians, around 500 BC, and continuing with the Greeks and Saka tribes, the region between Afghanistan and Kashmir was usually viewed as one cultural entity. The name Kashmir was not generally limited to the small Himalayan valley until Kushan times, in the early centuries AD. By the time of the Huna invasions, towards the beginning of the sixth century, which also encompassed both regions, Gandharan kings had used Kashmir as a refuge and likewise Kashmiri rulers could find temporary safety in the neighbouring area when needed. Despite invasions and wars, the commercial and cultural exchange between the adjacent regions continued without interruption. Even to later visitors, such as the Chinese monks of the seventh and eighth centuries, the cultures

of the two regions still seemed to be essentially one. After Huna rule, by the end of the sixth century, Kashmir entered its greatest period of political and cultural attainment with the Karkota dynasty (AD 600-855), including its greatest period of temple building.

Except for neolithic stones, no archaeological remains before the Kushan period are known in Kashmir, although the often mentioned Asokan stupas, with their supporting structures for habitation and worship, must have once been prominent in Srinagar, the town he founded. Asoka's son, Jalauka, is said to have erected Saivite temples in the narrow Wangath valley, although the stone temples there today are all of Karkota or later date. There seems little reason to doubt the native texts, particularly the *Nilamatapurana,* which claims this to be one of the ancient locations of Siva worship, a site along a pilgrimage route and one that continued to be supported for more than a thousand years.[3] Despite Stein's diligent search for early remains in the late nineteenth century, no trace of these early Wangath monuments was found.

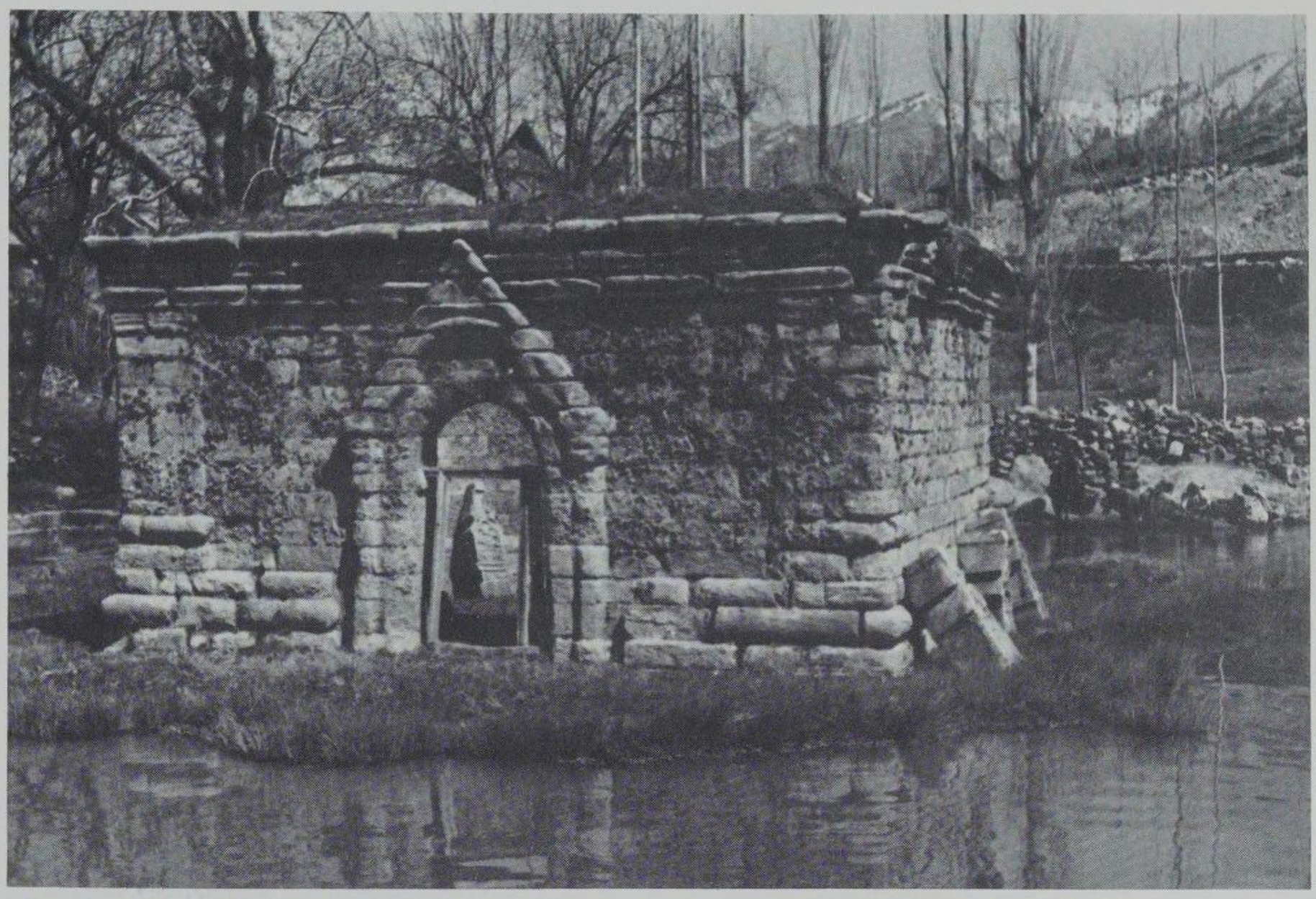
I. The Early Hindu Style

Just as stone and bronze images of seventh- and eighth-century Karkota rule are regarded as examples of "classic" Kashmiri art, so also Hindu temples of the Karkota dynasty best exemplify the typical architectural style. Although no complete examples survive, the remains at Buniar, Martand, Pandrethan and Payar reveal most of the features that have come to be understood as distinctive of the Kashmiri style. Many of the monuments are linked to Kashmir's remarkable king, Lalitaditya, who ruled during most of the first half of the eighth century and whose military exploits extended Kashmiri influence well beyond the small valley. As so often happens, political achievements, so important at the time, are largely forgotten, but artistic creations remain as a lasting testament. In Lalitaditya's case, Karkota temples better express his vision than any of his ambitious military ventures.

Fig. 1 Nearly all studies of Kashmiri temples give Loduv precedence as the earliest remaining stone structure. Not mentioned by Kalhana or in the accounts of the Chinese monks, it first appears in the writings of nineteenth-century visitors such as Vigne and Courie, who gave the first description in 1866.[4] Courie listed its essential features, giving a square ground-plan of seven metres on each side with only one doorway. He noted the pilasters at the corners, a slightly overhanging cornice and a single arched, but not trefoil, doorway surmounted with a triangular pediment resting upon two pilasters. His drawing of the doorway, also published later by Foucher (who compares it with the Guniyar temple in Swat), oddly enough omits the trefoil arch surrounding the opening, although it remains clearly visible today, even in photographs. Any evidence of a roof had long ago disappeared. The inside circular plan is unusual, contrary to the outside square. The diameter of over five metres at the floor level diminishes to four and a half metres at the projecting cornice, nearly three metres above the floor. There is no evidence of a surrounding wall although large numbers of stones are scattered about the area.

Loduv exhibits some of the typical Kashmiri features, such as the trefoil niche, rounded, projecting stone courses along the base and the elevated platform (although still partially under water from the nearby spring), and probably once included a pyramidal roof, suggested by the corbelled corners that imply a "lantern" ceiling as found later at Pandrethan or a domed construction such as seen at Payar. The adhesive qualities of the limestone mortar used in Kashmir permitted domes of some size, and spanning a temple the size of Loduv was possible. Its other features suggest an early date, notably the smaller individual stones and a simpler type of trefoil niche, consisting of a rounded arch inside a trefoil pediment. Later doorways include an inner door with another trefoil niche above the lintel, as seen on a number of eighth-century examples. Because of its unique (for Kashmir) circular plan and similarity to the Guniyar temple in Swat, Loduv cannot be dated later than the early years of the Karkota dynasty, perhaps even to the late sixth or early seventh century, following the end of Huna rule.

Fig. 2 Several other early Karkota temples are scattered across the Valley, all in deplorable condition. The cluster of ruins at Wangath, long a primary site of Siva worship due principally to its location along one of the Saiva pilgrimage routes, is noted by Kalhana as being continuously endowed over many centuries, although by his time it had already become neglected. Of the seventeen ruins remaining, a few retain enough of their original design to indicate their similarity to Loduv and to later monuments in the Valley. There is evidence of the typical Kashmiri stone walls, one temple with a front and rear chamber, one with a single entry door, another with two doors and at least one temple with four openings. Of considerable interest are the remains of stone ceilings, both domical and overlapping, as found at Loduv, and indicating again the "lantern" type of



1. View of Loduv temple.

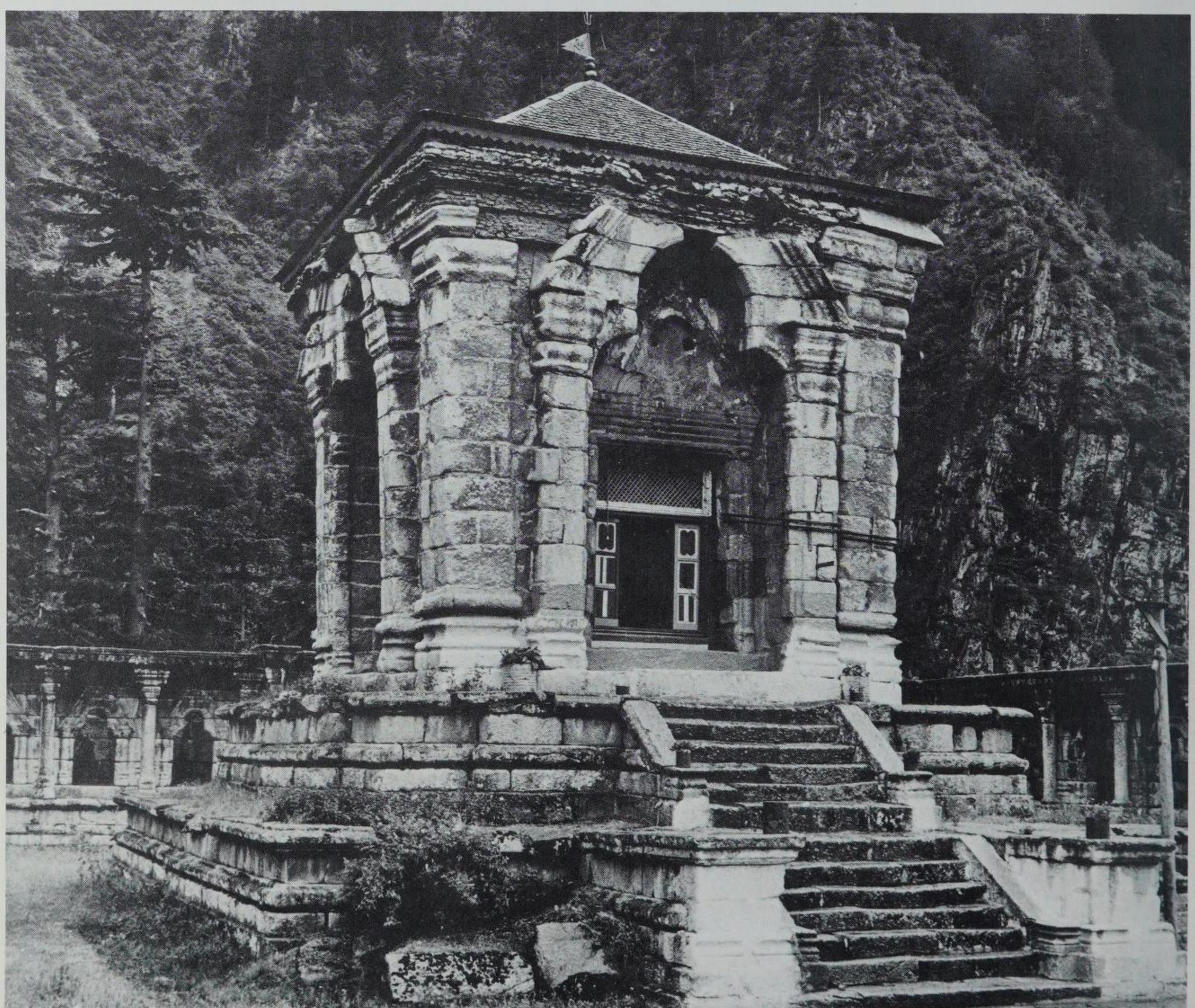
2. Wangath temples.

construction. The only decoration upon those ceilings appear to have been lotuses and other floral designs. Each shrine was raised upon a pedestal and most had a drain spout for the lingam, one over one and half metres in diameter. Enormous cut stones are scattered about the area, including one cistern, carved out of a single block, four and a half metres long and two metres wide. Fragments of decorative mouldings, similar to those found at Pandrethan and Payar, support claims that some of the temples here belong to Lalitaditya's reign, while the simplicity of the trefoil niches and details of the stone carving on others point to earlier Karkota donations, closer in date to the temple at Loduv.

All the evidence at Wangath indicates continuous building over a period of time and occasional modifications of earlier shrines. Of the later constructions, the most interesting is the large stone platform, thirty by twenty metres. In addition to once having a room in the centre, it included the bases of fluted columns, eight of them still in place, each about sixty centimetres in diameter, with an intercolumnation of over 3.6 metres, and a stairway facing the older group of temples. This construction is unique in Kashmir, and Kak may be correct in assigning it to the later period of Jayasimha (AD 1128-1155), when, according to Kalhana, one Sumanas, brother of a minister of the king, erected a *matha* or congregation hall in the midst of the destroyed Wangath temples.[5]

Fig. 3 The best preserved Kashmiri temple complex is at Buniar. With the exception of its pyramidal roof, it remains nearly intact with its raised shrine, monumental stone entrance gate and surrounding cellular peristyle. Although smaller than Martand, it has suffered less damage, due in part to being made of granite which is more durable than the limestone used in nearly all other Kashmiri temples. However, the building of the modern road up to the entrance gate covered over portions of the base and stairway as well as the guardian images once part of the entrance.

The double entrance gate, almost 7.6 metres wide and nearly equal to the width of the cella, provides a visual axis for the entire complex. It repeats the shape of the shrine, anchors the



3. Buniar temple.

colonnade of cells and orients the worshipper to the temple plan. Once inside the gate, one is surrounded by the intact quadrangle, measuring forty-four by thirty-six and a half metres and consisting of fifty-three elevated cells. The entrance to each cell is in the form of a trefoil niche (the same design carved in miniature upon the entrance gate) enclosed in a triangular pediment resting upon half-engaged columns. Directly in front of the cells is a colonnade, standing upon a base similar in style to that of the temple itself. These columns are connected to the niches by transverse beams and atop these remains the first course of the entablature, with its frieze of miniature trefoils. The elevated base and small size of these cells suggest that they originally held images, as seen on the earlier Buddhist quadrangles in Gandhara, where chapels surround the main stupa, such as at Takht-i-Bahi.

The shrine itself, upon the typical double base, is a square of four metres with both the ceiling and roof being modern reconstructions. Although presently a Siva temple, Buniar must have been originally dedicated to Vishnu, for the pedestal of the primary image had decorative mouldings on three sides and was placed against the back wall of the cella, unlike Siva temples where the lingam stood in the centre of the shrine to allow circumambulation.

Despite the generally well-preserved structural forms, the absence of imagery, usually found upon the walls of Kashmiri shrines and gateways, gives the Buniar temple a curious empty quality, reinforced by the surrounding open cells of the peristyle. Neighbouring shrines, such as Fattehgarh, Uri and Datemandir, all reveal something of the same style as Buniar although retaining less of their original form and decoration. To better understand the eighth-century Kashmiri architectural idiom it is necessary to turn to the temple complex at Martand.

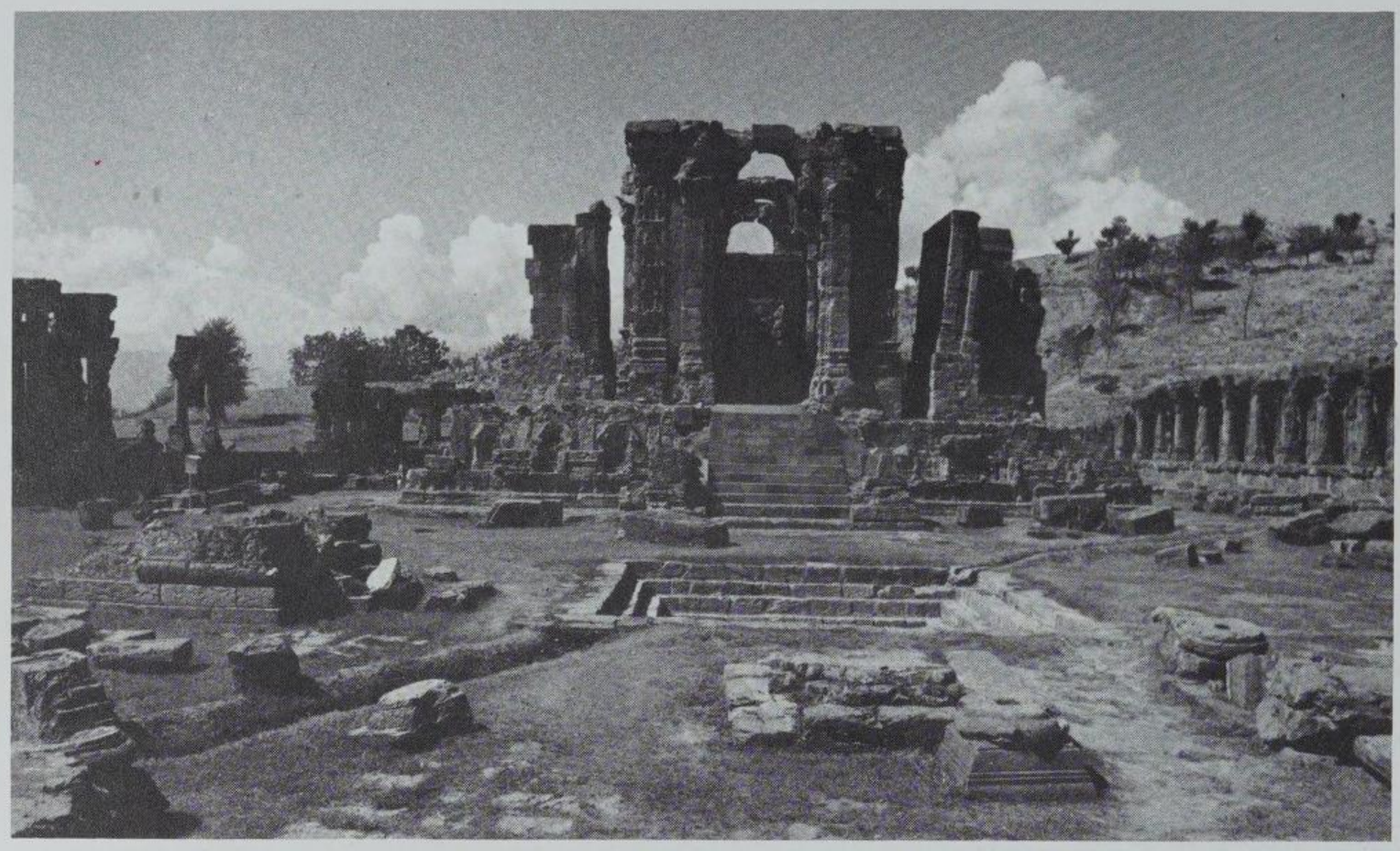
Named after the sun-god Martanda, this is Kashmir's best known monument. Except for the later Orissan temple at Konarak, it may well be the largest shrine dedicated to the sun-god, remaining in India. By virtue of its size, completeness and splendid location it has long attracted the attention of visitors to the Valley and was well known, still in worship and in excellent condition during the twelfth century, when Kalhana wrote ". . .that liberal king built the wonderful shrine of Martanda, with its massive walls of stone within a lofty enclosure."[6] Kalhana's "liberal king" was Lalitaditya and among the many statues and temples credited to his patronage, Martand remains his finest monument. *Figs. 4, 5*

Like Harwan and Parihasapura, Martand is situated with a commanding view of the valley below. The site had long been favoured by worshippers of Surya, as noted in the *Nilamatapurana* which was composed in the seventh or eighth century, but the earliest mention of the Martand temple is found in the text by Kalhana, where he credits its construction to Lalitaditya. It continued to command respect, if Jonaraja's fifteenth-century addition to Kalhana's history is accurate, until the desecrations of Sultan Sikander around AD 1400. Later Muslim writers expressed astonishment at its finely cut stones, impressive pillars and the presence of a dome, made of stone, over the main shrine.

Martand is the largest of the early Brahmanical type of Kashmiri temple. Instead of the Buddhist grouping of enclosed assembly halls, here one finds a large and elevated central shrine, surrounded on all sides by an expansive courtyard, sixty-seven metres deep and forty-three metres wide and enclosed by a pillared arcade. Within the surrounding arcade are some eighty or so individual cells, now empty but once occupied by Hindu images associated with Surya and the various forms of Vishnu. The pedestals remaining in some of the cubicles confirm their use as image shrines. This particular arrangement probably derives from earlier Buddhist structures, where monastic demands caused monks' cells to surround a central courtyard which was often open but could also include an elevated shrine. In Gandharan examples, such as seen at Takht-i-Bahi,[7] the cells were reduced in size, further elevated above the courtyard floor, and instead of providing lodging for monks enclosed images and reliquary-stupas, in the same fashion as found in Kashmiri Hindu temples such as Buniar and Martand.

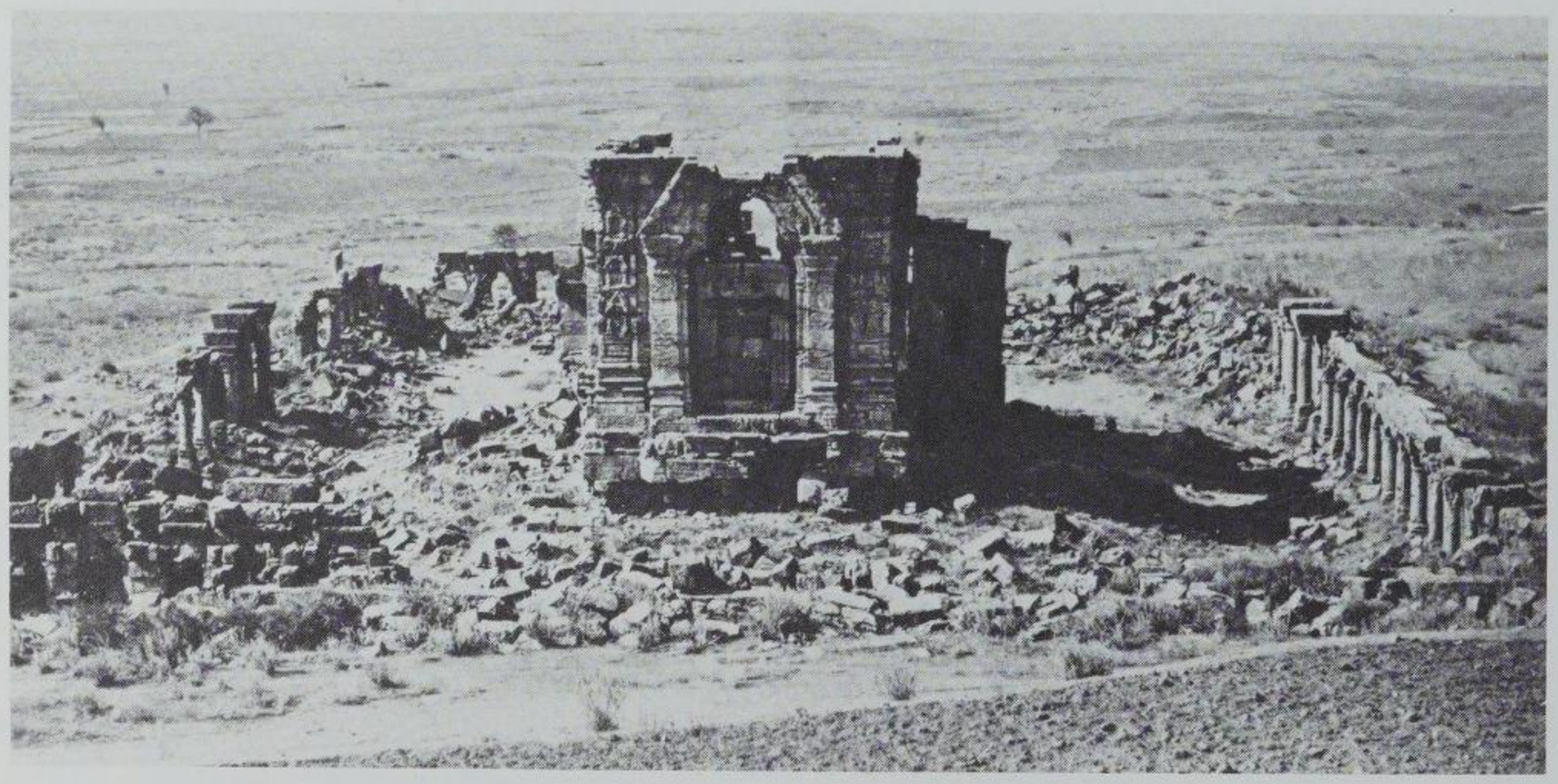
The placement of these cells, noticeably above the courtyard floor, creates a dramatic effect, visually cutting off the outside world and placing the statues above the eye-level of the worshipper. The cells were roofed over and in front of the side walls of each stood a fluted column, held in place at the top by a continuous architrave. The opening of each cell is enclosed by the typical Kashmiri trilobed arch, set inside a triangular pediment. Small geese or ducks are carved atop the capital of each of the flanking pilasters and another bird is found within the secondary triangular niche at the top. At each of the two larger cells, midway along the northern and southern sides, there remain circular sockets that once supported wooden doors.

From outside the complex, the approaching worshipper's view is dominated by the colossal double gateway which leads immediately to the ritual tank and on to the towering *mandapa* facade directly ahead. Unlike the often sprawling Buddhist complexes, here all

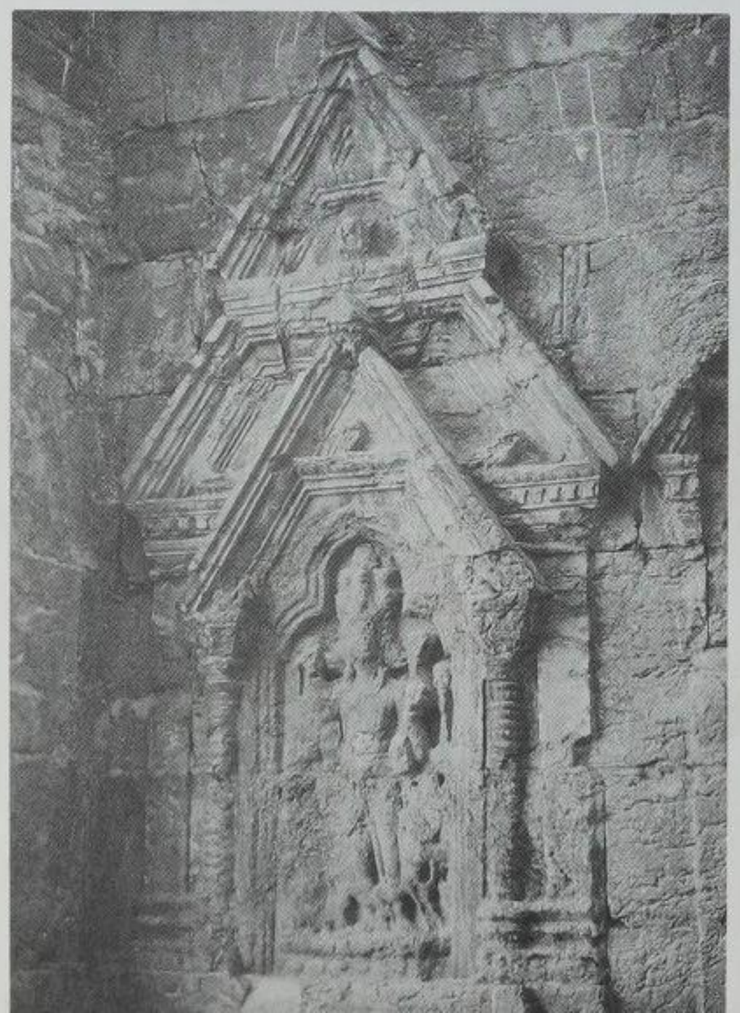


4. Martand temple.

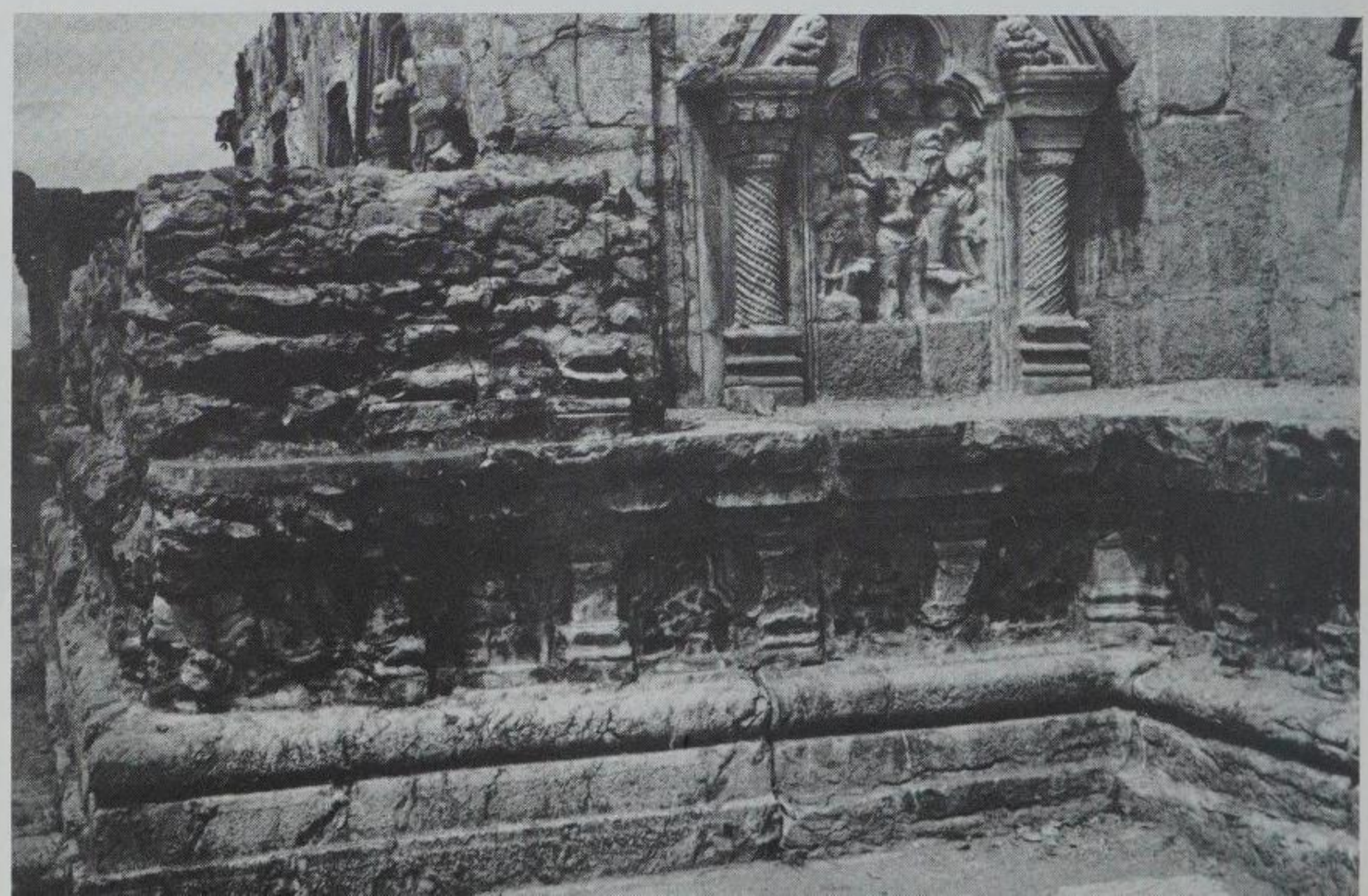
5. View of Martand taken in 1866. (After Cole, *Illustrations of Buildings in Ancient Kashmir* [London, 1869]).



6. Pent-roof motif and Vishnu figure, Martand.



7. Surya from Martand.



ceremonies and processions were conducted within the spacious enclosed courtyard surrounding the lofty, central structure. Each of the three primary elements—temple, arcade and gateway—is raised well above the floor, enhancing its already sizeable proportions, and Martand is further distinguished by its physical situation upon a plateau, with a panoramic view of the Kashmiri valley beyond, serving to give added monumentality to the entire complex.

The central shrine is composed of an elevated pair of connected structures, the first Kashmiri temple to have more than one room, and two detached side shrines. The primary, central structure is nineteen metres in length and eleven metres wide at the rear but narrows to eight metres at the front. At their greatest present height the remains reach twenty-three metres. The first chamber contains relief carvings about the inner walls while the rear sanctum, once the location of the primary image, probably of Surya, is devoid of any carvings. Adjacent to the main shrine, the two detached structures are located about one metre outside the walls, and are some five and a half by four metres in size. Each is divided into a front and rear section by a central wall with no connecting door, the only entrance being from the front or the back. These paired shrines were once attached, at the top, to the main structure.

There have been questions about the original design of the roof over the main shrine. The ubiquitous Kashmiri double pent-roof, utilized as a decorative motif throughout Martand, seems unlikely to have been suitable for such a massive span, although a single, triangular pediment, made of stone or more likely of wood and copper, may have been the roof type. Such a design is found on the monolithic stone shrine carved inside a cave at the base of the hill just below Martand. Some fragments of stone have led others to suggest that Martand once included the intersecting "lantern" ceiling so often found on smaller temples. One curious piece of evidence that suggests that it did not originally have a pediment inside a trefoil arch, as found so often in Kashmir, is the presence of broken pediments, located just below the beginning of the stone arches that remain above the entrance to the cella. It is clear from the angle of these pediments that they would not fit within the existing trefoil arch and were broken or removed later to allow the arch to be constructed.

The answer to this and other questions about Martand are complicated by its various rebuildings. It has long been known that Lalitaditya's Martand was built over an older monument. Fragments of earlier sculpture can be seen along the outside of the rear wall. The two detached, double shrines, placed on either side, at the front of the platform, have yet to be satisfactorily explained and still appear as additions rather than part of a cohesive plan. Because each is divided into two parts, what was once a Surya temple may have been modified by Vaishnavas into the five-part, or *panchayatana,* Vishnu temple, as found elsewhere in Kashmir. In addition, many of the decorative details within the shrine and about the plinth are of a style later than that associated with eighth-century Kashmiri art, and along with what appear to be structural alterations at the entrance to the cella, noted above, indicate that alterations and additions did take place. Martand, originally dedicated to the sun-god, may have been remodelled to suit the ninth- or tenth-century taste of the then dominant Vaishnava cult. The numerous solar affinities within Vishnu worship allow for the absorption of a Surya temple with minimal alterations beyond the primary image, in this case long since removed. The numerous subsidiary images fit well into both Surya and Vishnu worship.

The primary image was removed or destroyed even before Kalhana's time, and few of the many relief carvings that once adorned the inner walls of the shrine remain distinct today. Some idea of this missing image, likely to have been of the sun-god Surya, may be gained from the monumental quality of the ninth-tenth-century bronze Surya now in the Cleveland Museum.[8] Human destruction, certainly underway by the fifteenth century, and the poor quality of a friable limestone unable to withstand Kashmir's seasonal temperature changes, have combined to reduce many of the relief carvings to battered forms barely distinguishable from the adjacent uncarved but badly weathered wall surface. Not one of the fourteen figures located just below the cornice in the front shrine is recognizable. Likewise, along door frames and within triangular niches above doorways are fragmentary pieces of sculpture effaced beyond recognition.

Some of the larger figures, however, do retain enough of their original form to be identified. Upon each side wall of the front chamber is a relief carving of a miniature Kashmiri shrine, complete with double pent-roof, enclosing the familiar figure of one of the river goddesses. The north wall contains the graceful form of Ganga, holding a water-pot in her left hand and a lotus stalk in her right. She stands atop a *makara* and is flanked by two attendants, one holding an umbrella over her head. Directly across, also served by two attendants but standing upon a tortoise, is an image of Yamuna. Above each is a pair of flying figures holding a crown.

The front shrine includes the remains of several large images, but even more damaged than the river goddesses. The best preserved one is upon the north wall. Inside a double pent-roofed *Fig. 6*

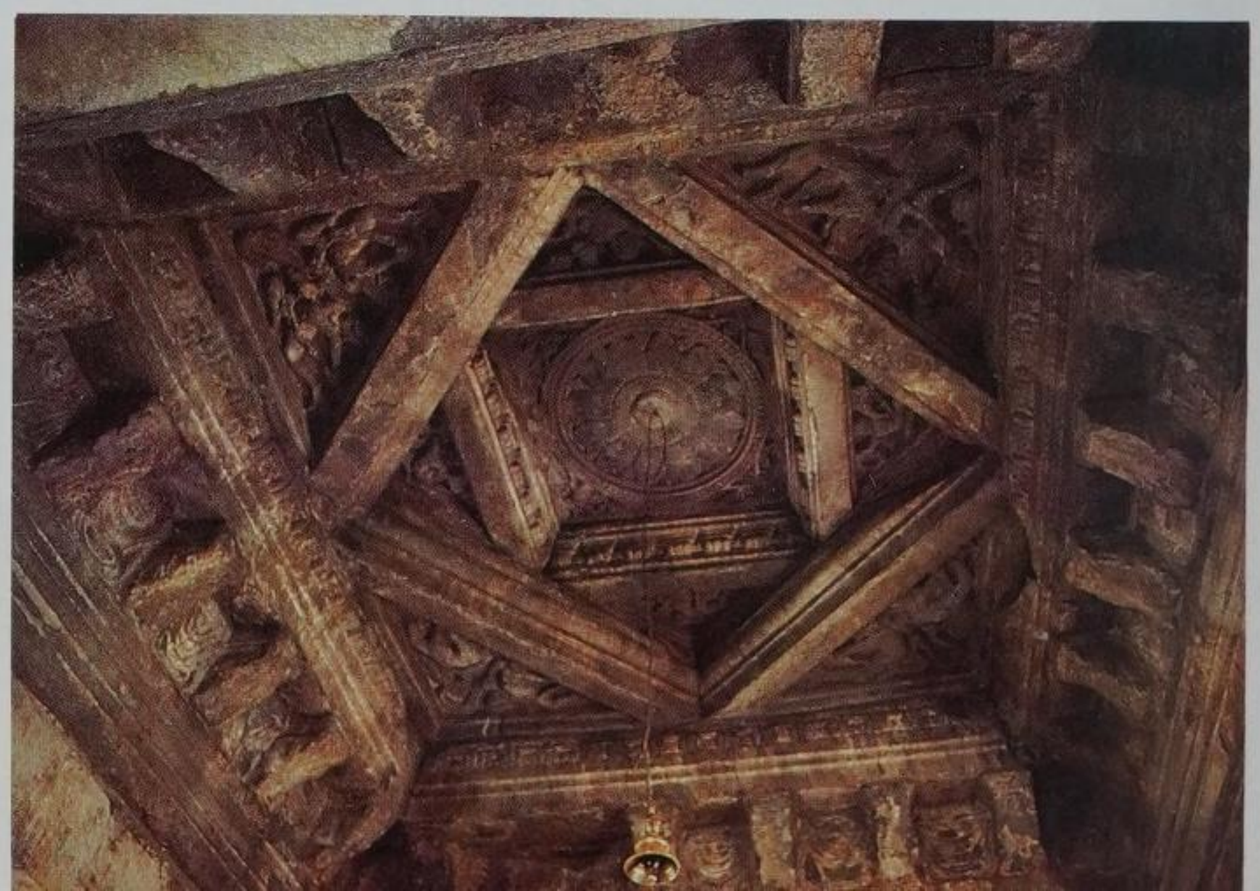
shrine is a multi-armed image of Vishnu, in the style frequently found among late eighth- or ninth-century Kashmiri sculptures. There are three primary heads: the placid central face of Vasudeva, flanked by the boar and lion heads representing Aniruddha and Sankarshana. Between the feet of the god is Prithvi, the earth goddess. The various attributes are too effaced to be distinguished. Atop the three primary heads is a group of seven more, in rows, with one at the top. This representation, known as Vishvarupa, was rare in Kashmir but well known elsewhere and follows the iconography found in earlier Gupta images from Mathura rather than contemporary versions known in Nepal. In the former, the boar and lion heads are present, while Nepalese examples preferred only human heads. Directly across from the Vishnu image is a severely damaged three-headed figure that has been identified by some as another form of Vishnu. However, as pointed out by Mitra, the two side heads are not animal-like, in fact the right face is fierce looking, suggesting the image is probably that of Mahadeva.[9]

One of a group of smaller images at the rear of the shrine can be identified as that of Surya. It shows the god flanked by attendants and riding a chariot pulled by seven horses and driven by Aruna. Other images of Surya are found amongst the rows of figures surrounding the plinth,
Fig. 7 although in a later style than those inside. Of considerable interest is one image of Surya in which the god is shown in his typical non-Indian garb (the only major Hindu god represented in foreign dress), most notably the boots, but riding a horse and proceeding directly toward the viewer, similar to later Surya images from eastern India and unlike the canonical versions where he rides in a chariot.[10]

The dominant decorative motif throughout the monument—upon the entrance gate, about the peristyle, in the main shrine, upon doorway mouldings and surrounding most images—is the distinctive architectural niche. It probably derives from Gandhara but also follows the roof design of local Kashmiri temples. It consists of three major parts, blended into a harmonious design. The innermost niche is a trefoil opening with filleted moulding to enhance its trilobed form. This is contained within a triangular pediment resting atop attached columns. Those columns are decorated with repeated chevron, lozenge or a variety of bead and cushion patterns. A large capital, with its own decorative patterns, sometimes including small geese or mythical creatures, joins each of these columns to the pediment. The trefoil niche and triangular pediment are both enclosed by the third part, a larger version of the latter but more elaborate and topped with a double pent-roof. The mouldings are recessed, giving a degree of depth to the outline, enhancing the geometric shapes and strengthening the entire form.

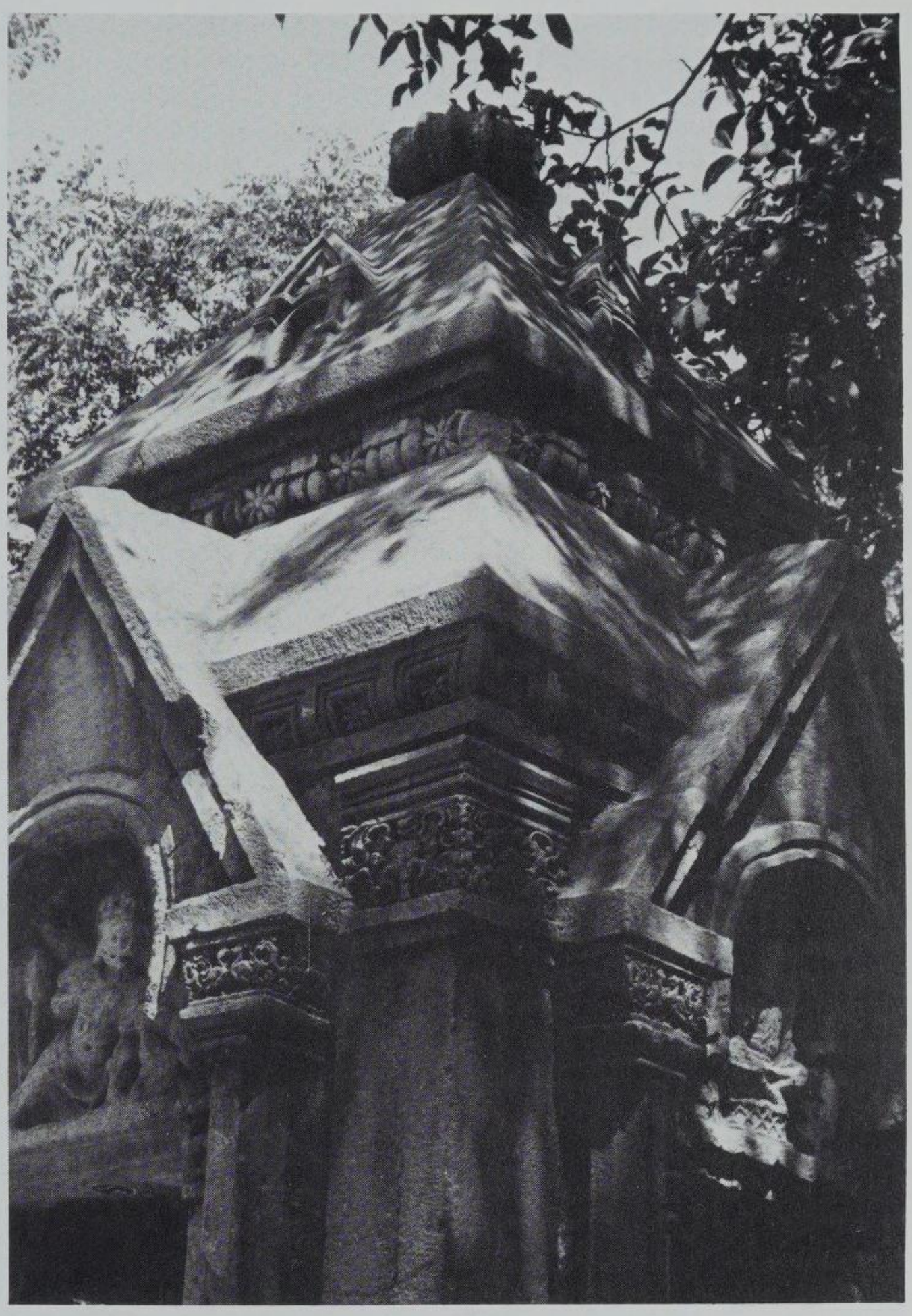
Were it not for the traditional popularity of the sun-god cult in north-western India and the name of the temple being Martand, this structure might today be judged to have been dedicated to Vishnu, so prominent are the images of that deity. Numerous and important temples to Surya were well supported in the northern part of India, as noted in the records of Hsuan Tsang, including one erected by Mihirakula, the same Huna chief who ravaged much of Buddhist Gandhara and ended his days in Kashmir.[11] The unusual arrangement of the various parts of Martand, notably the two side shrines at the western end, may derive, in part, from the Surya cult itself. The Kashmiri *Vishnudharmottarapurana,* redacted in the seventh century, offers certain clues to explain this temple plan. According to Kramrisch, it lists one hundred and one types of temples and describes a shrine called a Garuda temple but actually dedicated to Surya. Composed of a main shrine and attached side shrines, it forms the shape of the Garuda or sun-bird, ". . .who carries Surya. . . . The Sun temple Garuda houses the image of Surya, in the central building. It is flanked in the lateral shrines by Danda and Pingala or Saturn and Yama. . . ."[12]

8. View of Pandrethan temple.
9. Ceiling, Pandrethan.



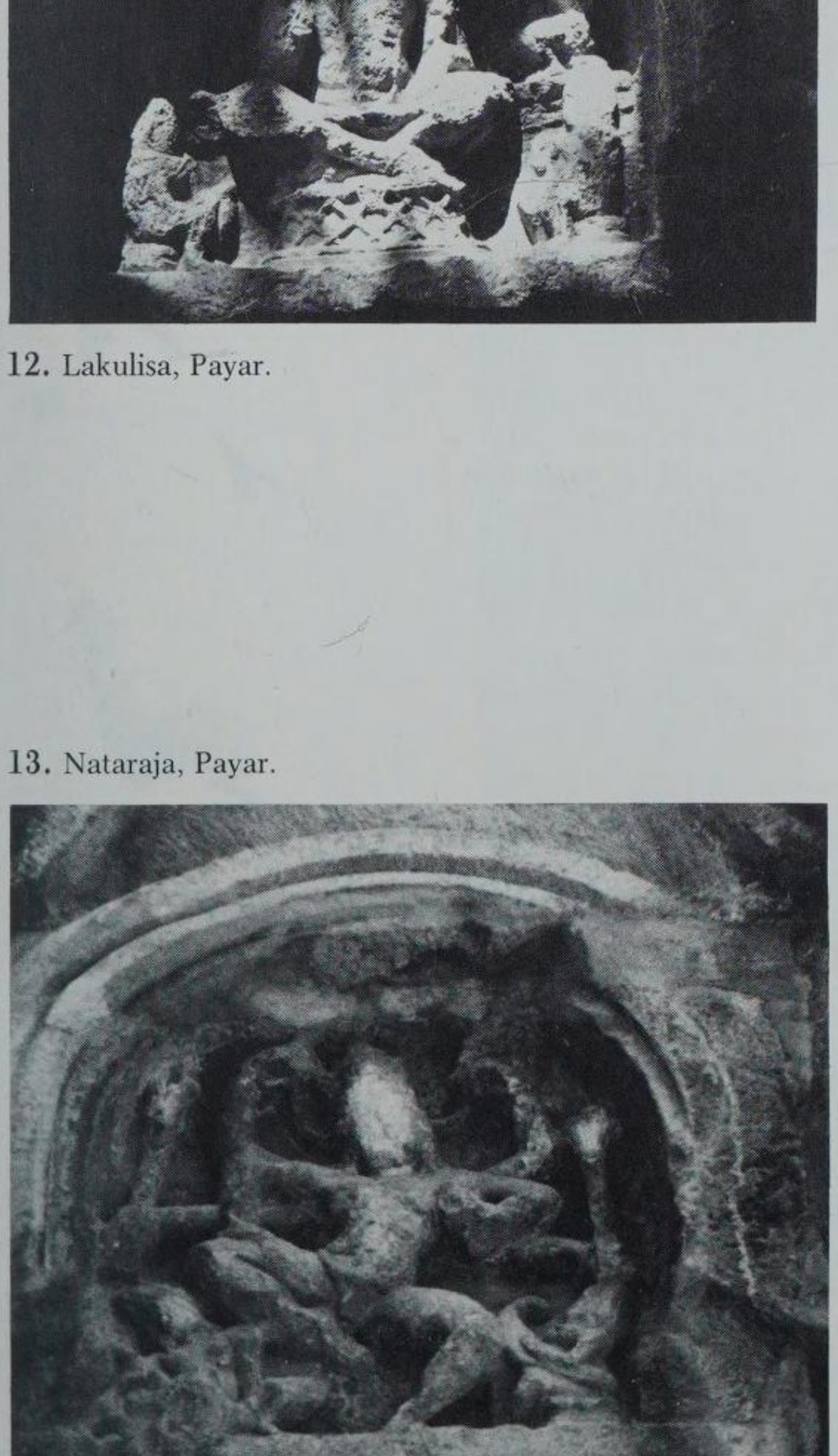
10. Shrine at Payar.

12. Lakulisa, Payar.

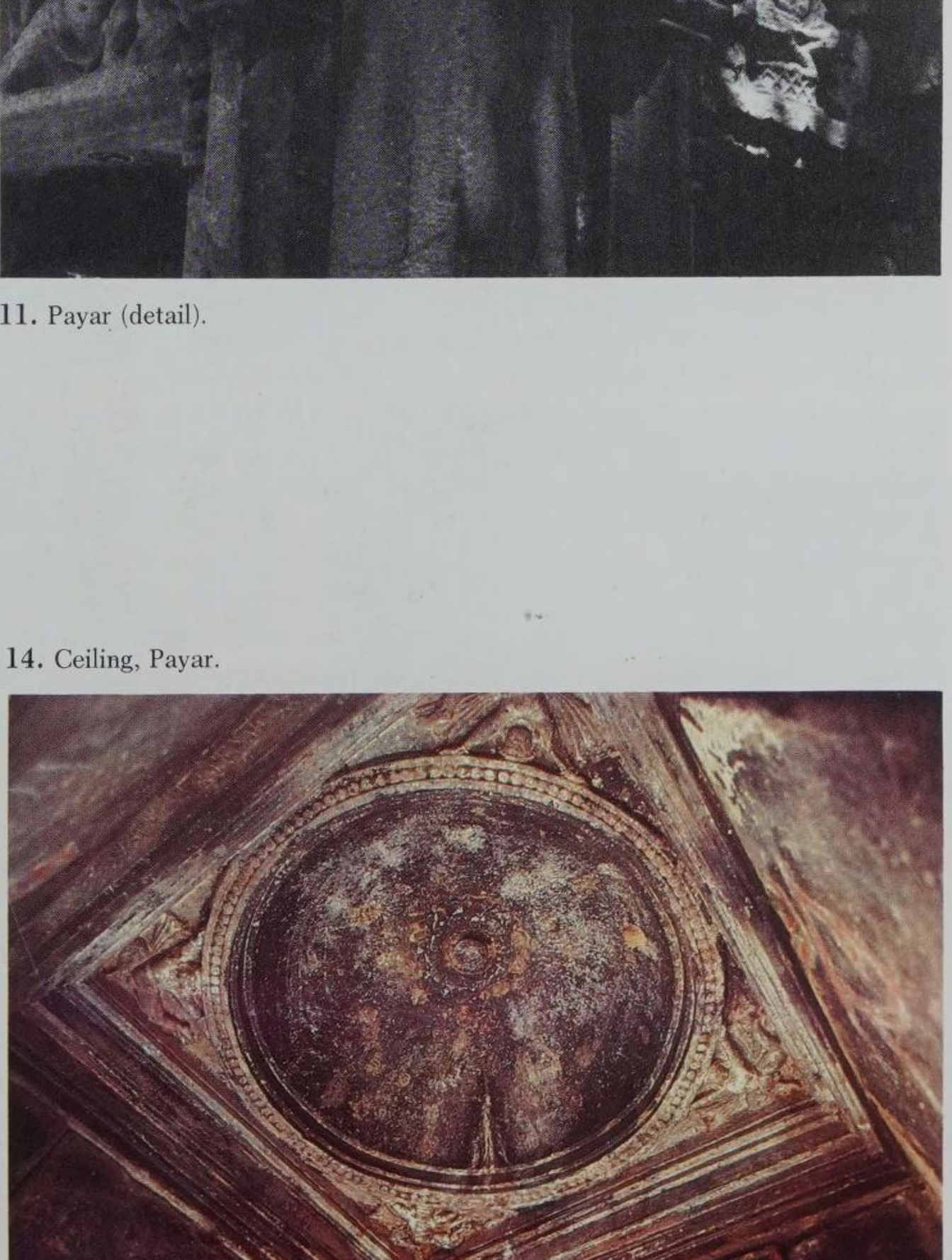


11. Payar (detail).

13. Nataraja, Payar.



14. Ceiling, Payar.



Subsequent Hindu temples, the most prominent being those erected in the ninth century by the Utpalas, follow the design of Martand. However, another architectural feature was also developed in temples during the Karkota period and like many of Martand's features it belongs to both the north-western part of India and to the Kashmiri tradition. This feature is the formation of intersecting cross-members, best known as the "lantern" ceiling. Like so many aspects of stone architecture, it derives from wooden models as still found throughout the nearby Himalayan regions and well known across Central Asia, as seen in replicas painted and carved upon the domes of the Buddhist caves from Bamiyan to Kyzil and across to Dunhuang, appearing ultimately in China and Korea. It was known within the Indian subcontinent but despite its obvious mandala-like configuration, should be considered a minor type there. Its popularity in the north-west[13] may be due to its probable origin, from nearby Parthian styles, coming into India with Parthian influence just prior to Kushan rule.

Figs. 8, 9 The most dramatic and best preserved example of the "lantern" ceiling in Kashmir is found in the Siva temple at Pandrethan. Due to its remarkable state of preservation and a passage in Kalhana that some have linked to this temple,[14] and despite numbers of stone images, fully in the eighth-century style, found about the area, the Pandrethan Siva temple has usually been dated late. Local legend tells of its being mostly submerged and completely covered over by foliage and it still sits in the middle of a freshwater spring, this possibly accounting for its not being desecrated. Its architectural and sculptural style suggest a date well within the Karkota period, possibly during the reign of Lalitaditya.

Pandrethan conforms to the architectural features established at Buniar, notably a tall shrine with distinctive doorways and a system of alternating trefoil and triangular openings. Much of the decorative moulding about the capitals closely matches the remains from an eighth-century capital found at Parihasapura, and the flying figures upon the ceiling are more similar to Gupta examples than to later medieval versions. The corbelled type of support system for the ceiling is the same as that found among early Karkota temples at Wangath and Fattehgarh. Most difficult to understand is the return of these seventh- and eighth-century motifs after the appearance of ninth-century Utpala styles, so dramatic are the decorative changes following the Karkota dynasty.

The temple base still remains under water, obscuring the rows of elephants and fine decorative carvings, but modern day visitors do not have to swim into the interior, as did nineteenth-century English visitors, but can walk across a metal bridge borrowed from the local military establishment. The temple retains its double pent-roof, lacking only the crowning member, similar to an *amalaka,* as well as some of the detailing around the doorways. The steeply pitched roof contains small *chaitya* window projections on each of four sides. The only remaining image, above the main door, is of a seated Lakulisa, evident by the cross-legged posture, elevated seat and the *lakuta* (staff) resting against the left arm. The other three niches probably once also contained images, as seen at the Payar temple.

The most dramatic aspect of this temple is the ceiling. It is composed of nine stone slabs arranged in overlapping courses with the exposed corners filled with flying figures known as *vidyadharas.* The topmost slab is carved into a twelve-petalled lotus, surrounded by a beaded border. The four corners of this stone also contain flying figures, different from the others in that they appear to support the central lotus with their outstretched hands. These ceiling stones are supported by a surrounding corbelled system that brings the upper portions of the walls slightly into the interior space. A similar effect is found with the walls of the earlier Loduv temple, but there all evidence of its actual ceiling is gone, only the corbelled walls remain.

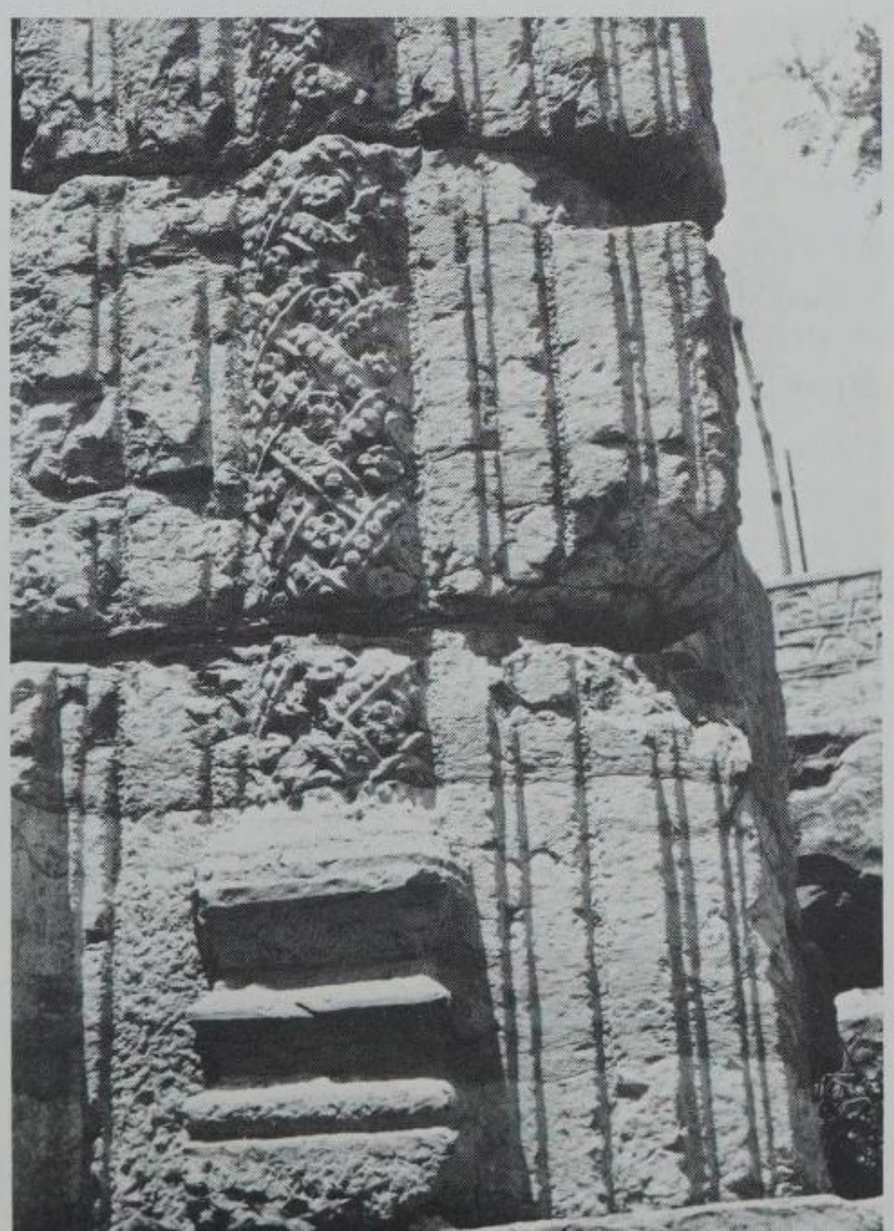
Figs. 10, 11 The last of the best preserved of the Karkota temples is the small but exquisitely detailed shrine at Payar. Composed entirely of only ten stones, plus the base, and standing only about six metres high, this elegant temple is unique among Kashmiri remains. It is not mentioned by Kalhana or anyone else until the early European visitors, due in large part to its location well away from the primary routes along the Valley. The elevated shrine is open on four sides, with steps leading up the east and the four doorways conform to the Karkota style trefoil and triangular arrangement, as does the double pent-roof. The decorative details about the capitals, two each supporting the triangular pediments and larger ones at each of the four corners of the shrine proper, are especially elaborate. Geese with foliate tails, stylized plants and kneeling cows comprise a nearly continuous decorative band encircling the shrine just below the roof, interrupted only by the four trefoil niches.

Fig. 12 The eastern niche, above the entrance, contains an image of Lakulisa, similar to but better preserved than the one at Pandrethan. Here can be seen the typical attributes of the wicker seat, crossed legs and meditation band, the *yogapatta,* and the four attendant figures, his principle *Fig. 13* disciples. At the western side is a dancing Siva in the *urdhavajanu* (raised thigh) pose. The

six-armed figure carries the *trisula* (trident) and *khatvanga* (ritual sceptre) and is accompanied by a male drummer and female lyre player. On the north face is the three-headed Siva, with *aghora* (ferocious) and benign female Umas flanking the peaceful central face. Over the southern doorway, with flames rising from behind, is an image of Siva as Bhairava, an elephant to his right and Devi to his left. Inside the shrine is the Sivalingam, with a circular dome above which has a lotus in the centre and a row of circles about the perimeter. The corners of the dome contain figures with their arms outstretched, supporting the dome and marking the transition from square ground-plan to circular roof. These figures appear to be flying and wear a sash about their mid-section with long cloth ends streaming behind. The entire dome and pictorial scene is carved from the single roof stone, less than two and a half metres across. *Fig. 14*

This ceiling arrangement, unique in Kashmir, perhaps in northern India, has seldom been published[15] and is of particular interest for its resemblance to earlier Western domes with cosmological symbolism. The supporting figures at Payar are closer in style to those of classical, Mediterranean types than to those at Pandrethan, which have more in common with Indian examples.

15. Avantiswami temple.



16. Decorative pilaster, Avantiswami. (*left*).

17. Donor panel, Avantiswami. (*right*).

II. The Later Hindu Style

The Karkota period, which ended in AD 855, was followed by the Utpala dynasty of nearly a hundred years (AD 856-939) and with it Kashmir's last era of vigorous temple building. The first Utpala ruler, Avantivarman, erected a complex of stone temples along the main road south from Srinagar, a site often visited by tourists today. Early twentieth-century efforts by the archaeological survey teams reconstructed it and a neighbouring temple that stand as the best
Fig. 15 preserved examples of post-Karkota architecture in Kashmir. The smaller of the two, Avantivarman's Avantiswami, is the better preserved and while adding little to the fundamental styles established in the preceeding dynasty, does include a remarkable example of portrait sculpture as well as changes in the earlier decorative motifs.

Fig. 16 These temples are more ornate than Karkota works, especially the elaborate pilasters carved to look more like wooden columns than the more classical styles from earlier times. As Percy Brown pointed out, the egg and dart of classical antiquity is replaced now by native lotus petals.[16] Nearly all the pilasters are decorated with a rich variety of motifs, some native to India, others reflecting West Asian taste, as found upon Sassanian silver: roundels that enclose lotuses, geese, mythical creatures, paired humans, birds and flowers as well as numerous geometric patterns that all together give these ninth-century monuments a livelier quality than was possible with the older, fluted columns of Karkota temples. Otherwise, the layout and trefoil and arch motifs known at Martand are here repeated, and sharing the peristyle enclosure with the main Avantiswami shrine are four smaller temples, making the five-part complex (*panchayatana*) favoured by Kashmiri Vaishnavas. Of great interest, however, are the portrait reliefs that once
Fig. 17 adorned these Avantipur temples. Both donors, the king and the queen, are represented, the largest representations being the separate plaques on either side of the stairs leading to the main shrine. The great number of stone Vaishnava images discovered here and now in the Sri Pratap Singh Museum in Srinagar, attest the active artistic production of ninth-and tenth-century Kashmiri artists. However, these temples represent the last of the creative period of Kashmiri stone temple building, for soon internal strife and Muslim incursions bring to a halt over five centuries of imperial patronage and the epoch of Kashmiri Buddhist and Hindu architecture closes. Not until much later, when great wooden buildings dedicated to Islam began to appear across the Valley, did Kashmir once again witness the renewal of its earlier architectural vigour and creativity.

NOTES

1. Pran Gopal Paul, *Early Sculpture of Kashmir* (Leiden: privately printed, 1986), p. 12.
2. R.T., I, 86.
3. R.T., I, 107 and Stein's note.
4. W.G. Courie, "Notes on Some Temples of Kashmir, Especially Those not Described by General A. Cunningham, in his essay published in the J.A.S.B. for Sept., 1848," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* XVII, pt. 2 (September, 1866), pp. 97-100.
5. R.C. Kak, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir* (1933; reprint, New Delhi: Sagar Publications, 1971), p. 166.
6. R.T., IV, 192.
7. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture: Buddhist and Hindu Periods* (Bombay: D. B. Taraporevala Sons and Co., 1971), pl. XXXIII.
8. Sherman Lee, "Clothed in the Sun: A Buddha and a Surya from Kashmir," *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* (1967), pp. 43-63, with a colour plate on rear cover.
9. D. Mitra, *Pandrethan, Avantipur & Martand* (New Delhi: Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, 1977), p. 101.
10. Dr. P. Pal first noted this anomaly and suggested parallel works from areas far from Kashmir.
11. J.N. Banerjea (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1956), p. 431, note.
12. S. Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976), p. 422.
13. Klaus Fischer, *Dacher, Decken und Gewolbe indischer Kultstatten und Nutzbauten* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1974), pp. 182-187.
14. R.T., VIII, 2409.
15. First by A. Cunningham, "An Essay on the Arian Order of Architecture, as Exhibited in the Temples of Kashmir," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* XVII, pt. 2 (September, 1848), pp. 254-255; more recently in K. Fischer, op. cit., pl. 127 and by A. Soper, "The Dome of Heaven in Asia," *The Art Bulletin,* XXIX, no. 4 (1947), pp. 225-248 discusses these corner figures but illustrates other examples, including Pandrethan.
16. Percy Brown, "The Architecture of Kashmir," *Marg,* VIII, no. 2 (March, 1955), p. 49.

□

Early Stone and Terracotta Sculpture

John Siudmak

Stone Sculpture

The relatively small number of surviving stone sculptures from Kashmir is a poor reflection of a rich and prolific artistic tradition which relied mostly on court patronage stretching back to the time of Asoka. Most of the remains date from the Karkota period when the style reached its maturity or from later. What may be regarded as the classical phase dates from the first half of the eighth century and flourished during the reign of Lalitaditya-Muktapida (*circa* second quarter of the eighth century). It lasted until about AD 850 after which there was a gradual decline. Most sculptures belonging to this classical phase can be grouped into a number of schools partly overlapping in time. Apart from one isolated example, nothing survives prior to the fifth century.[1]

The Kashmir style was very eclectic and attracted many different influences during its development which reflected, to a large degree, the political conditions of the time and the relative position of Kashmir. The emergence of a national style paralleled the growth of Kashmir as a major political power. Its rise to power was enhanced by the political hiatus created by the destruction of neighbouring Gandhara and the weakening of the Gupta empire in the south by the White Hunas in the second half of the fifth and early sixth century. Artistically both areas had overshadowed Kashmir. However, although there is some evidence of direct Gupta influence, the predominant influence was from the north-west, either from Gandhara or from the post-Gandhara tradition which survived in the region. This was natural given the geographical proximity of Gandhara to Kashmir and was generally the case historically with the exception of the Mauryan period when the local art must have followed Mauryan conventions.

Most of Kashmir's artistic heritage was systematically destroyed in the early fourteenth century by Sikander Butshikan, one of the early Muslim kings, and many of the ruins were pillaged for the construction of mosques. Finally, ruins which survived into the nineteenth century suffered in turn partly at the hands of Maharaja Ranbir Singh who built many new temples at pilgrimage sites using material from ancient ruins and partly through their destruction into modern times for the building of new roads. Thus apart from a number of excavated sculptures, the majority of the remains are fragmentary.

These remains can be classified into two groups: sculptures in the round and architectural relief work. Sculpture in the round was usually carved in greater detail with a finer finish and a high polish. The material used was a characteristic fine-grained chlorite schist capable of being worked in fine detail and ranging in colour from a dark grey often with dark green or reddish-brown patches to a uniform dark green. The smoothness of the surface was enhanced by regular ritual ablution. Single figures or groups of larger size were carved with tangs which slotted into stepped bases on which they stood in shrines or niches. These bases were generally carved with drainage channels at one side.

In addition, there was a great tradition of miniature work. Miniature images could be placed around the cult figure in a shrine or used for private worship. By far the most popular Hindu

images in Kashmir were those of the four-armed Siva or of Vishnu with one or three heads, accompanied by diminutive figures at their sides representing their personified attributes.

The architectural work was executed from a coarser granite-like grey stone. The work was usually much cruder and probably most of it was coated in lime and painted over after installation. Many of the works discussed here are of this type, carved in high relief with a plain, roughly finished back-plate which was fitted into the necessary space in the building. Although there is a difference in quality and detail between the two types of work, the style is essentially the same, whether Hindu or Buddhist. All the sculptures discussed in the following sections are in the Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar, unless otherwise stated.

Bejbehara

The present name of the town replaces the ancient one of Vijayesvara named after the famous shrine of Siva. It was one of the most important pilgrimage places in the Valley and the seat of the ancient southern administrative division of Madavarajya. It lies by the banks of the River Jhelum in the south of the Valley.

Frequently mentioned in Kalhana's *Rajatarangini,* legend associates it with Asoka. The town appears to have had a close association with Gandhara as Kalhana mentions a large land grant by the White Huna king Mihirakula to a community of Gandhara brahmans settled there.[2]

A small group of early Hindu sculptures survives from the site with a number of features which correspond to Gandhara art. These are large-scale sculptures in the round although the treatment is rather linear.

Fig. 1 *Fig. 2* The six-armed Karttikeya, identified by his vehicle the peacock, compares closely with a Gandhara bodhisattva image in terms of his massive frame with powerful shoulders and strictly frontal stance although there is no articulation of the stomach muscles (this feature reappears in the eighth century). The ornaments compare with some modification to the standard ornamentation of a bodhisattva. The slender sacred thread of the Karttikeya clearly derives from the amulet cord of the bodhisattva although it falls further down the body as does the twisted double-string pearl necklace which crosses the upper right arm below the simple pearl-bordered arm-band. The sacred thread gradually increases in length and can be used as an indication of date. A simple necklace with a pendant replaces the more elaborate wide torque and long necklace with confronting dragon-heads of the bodhisattva. There are also points of comparison in the case of the hair arrangement which is similar to some Gandhara Maitreya images where the hair is gathered up in two wide loops with loose strands falling onto the shoulders.

The dhoti is shorter than that of the bodhisattva which reaches the ankles but the same stylized movement can be seen in the flattened projecting flap at the sides. The material clings to the body with a series of dense pleats between the legs indicated by 'string folds', a feature common in the early art of both Kashmir and Gandhara. The floral garland which loops in front of the body falling near the knees can be compared to the scarf of the bodhisattva. Its form, in a series of overlaid floral segments, should be noted. Although this type of garland does appear in Gandhara, it is more closely associated with Gupta Vishnu images. It becomes a strong feature of Kashmiri art and is used for most Hindu deities.

Fig. 3 The four-armed goddess, identified as a form of Durga by the prongs of a trident at the side of her right foot, is dressed in Hellenistic style and compares closely with a number of Gandhara images. Like the previous figure she stands in a strictly frontal position, and she wears a high-waisted chiton and a long scarf. A cord passes over the left shoulder and forms a loop in front of her body. The scarf falls in a series of folds at her feet, a treatment which may be seen on many early standing female deities in Kashmir. If she represents Mahesvari, she may have formed part of a *matrichakra* or circle of mother goddesses to which there are a number of references in the *Rajatarangini.*

Fig. 4 An early lion similar to Gandhara examples stands near the site of an ancient temple by the riverside at Bejbehara. The site was probably that of the ancient shrine of Siva Vijayesvara, and material was removed from here for the construction of the nineteenth-century temple a short distance away. The lion appears frequently in Kashmiri art not only as a temple guardian but also on the bases of images of the Buddha and of various Hindu deities.

The above examples may be dated to the second half of the fifth century and although a heavy Gandhara influence is evident, the work reflects a fresh and vigorous interpretation of the style. Despite a rather linear treatment, a great sense of vitality is conveyed by the flamboyant detailing of the drapery.

1. Karttikeya, Bejbehara; second half of the fifth century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

2. Gandhara bodhisattva, second/third century. Peshawar Museum.

Baramula

Another important early site is Baramula which derives its name from the ancient shrine of Varahamula named after Varaha, the boar incarnation of Vishnu. It is mentioned repeatedly in the *Rajatarangini* and the fifteenth-century chronicler, Jonaraja, has recorded the destruction of its sacred image. It lay on the right bank of the River Jhelum, on the opposite bank to the twin town of Ushkur, at the western entrance to the Valley. Due to its favourable position for trade, it was a prosperous centre in ancient times and one of the principal towns of the northern administrative division of Kramarajya.

A number of Hindu sculptures carved in the round survive from this area and share several distinctive features suggesting the existence of an important but short-lived school of sculpture. Although relating in some respects to the earlier school of Bejbehara, it is closely tied to the post-Gandhara tradition of the north-west, comprising the ancient Gandhara region and parts of Swat and Buner. This school has long been recognized from the numerous Buddhist and Hindu miniature images found in the region. It is part of a generalized style which extended to Afghanistan, throughout the Panjab and probably as far south as Sind which absorbed many features of late Gupta art.

Fig. 5 The most impressive example of this school is an addorsed image of Mahesvara from the village of Fattehgarh.[3] The principal image is three-headed, the main Siva head framed by smaller heads of Bhairava and Uma; on the reverse is an enigmatic figure whose identity is uncertain. Accompanied by his vehicle, the bull, Siva was originally framed by two diminutive attendants representing his personified weapons, one of which remains.

This image also has a massive frame and stands in a strictly frontal position but the treatment is less linear than at Bejbehara, with swelling volume in the chest, stomach and thighs. It shares only two features with the Karttikeya, the slender sacred thread and the floral garland. The jewellery is again of simple form but instead of a series of necklaces, the image wears a torque with two confronting dragon-heads with beads in their mouths. This may ultimately derive from the Gandhara bodhisattva necklace but a single necklace is more typical of Gupta sculpture. The hair arrangement is not dissimilar to the Karttikeya but the face is much rounder.

Fig. 6 A Vishnu torso found at Baramula, compares directly with the Mahesvara in the general modelling and in the ornament and dress. The Vishnu wears an identical dragon-headed torque which is also found on an *eka-mukha-linga* still under worship at the Koteshvara temple at Baramula.[4] The dhoti and belt of the Vishnu torso are closer to the Gupta repertoire than to the typical north-west type. The manner of tying the belt is similar to the Mahesvara but there the ends are fanned out at the sides rather than falling parallel on the thigh as in the case of the Vishnu. This treatment is typical of a number of Gupta Buddha and Vishnu images.

Fig. 7 A Hindu triad, lacking the Vishnu, in the Bharat Kala Bhavan in Varanasi, may also be attributed to Baramula. The Siva-linga head has a beaded torque more typical of Gupta treatment, rather than a dragon-headed one, but the hair arrangement and facial type are very similar to the Mahesvara.

This school may be dated to the sixth century and must have greatly diminished in importance at the end of the century during the construction of the new capital by Pravarasena II when a major diversion of resources must have taken place. The impact of the style generally does not appear to have been very strong on the mainstream development although it appears to have acted as a conduit for a number of Gupta features which can be seen at Pandrethan.

Pandrethan

The modern name derives from the ancient one, Puranadhistana, meaning the old capital. It lies just outside modern Srinagar and was reputedly founded by Asoka. Its importance as a centre of art must go back to the earliest times and did not necessarily diminish after the foundation of the new capital as the construction of the temple of Meruvardhanaswami Vishnu as late as the tenth century shows. The largest group of remains comes from this site which even in the early 1920s was still very extensive. Ram Chandra Kak writing at the time noted that "the area is replete with heaps of ancient ruins which stud the mountain top for more than a mile."[5] None of the remains appears to date earlier than the sixth century and most of them date from the seventh century or later. The style is very vigorous with strong exaggerated features and the forms are more animated than in the earlier schools. A new repertoire of dress and ornament appears. This is difficult to explain in terms of earlier material since there are so many gaps in our

3. Durga or Mahesvari, Bejbehara; second half of the fifth century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

4. Seated lion, Bejbehara town; second half of the fifth century.

5. Addorsed image of Mahesvara, Fattehgarh, near Baramula; sixth century.

6. Vishnu, Baramula; sixth century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

7. Hindu triad, Baramula; sixth century. Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi.

knowledge but there is some continuity with the art of Bejbehara. The majority of the examples are high relief architectural panels.

An interesting link between the main seventh-century group and the art of Bejbehara is a badly damaged but very beautiful dancing mother goddess probably also from a *matrichakra.* *Fig. 9* This figure was reputedly found at Bejbehara and although considerably later, shares the same floral garland and simple jewellery of the Karttikeya and a similar hair arrangement. The three-part crown is tied at one side with flying ribbons of the same corrugated form. A sash is now tied across the hips with the loose ends trailing at one side. The sash is common in Gupta art and appears in some of the post-Gandhara images from the north-west; it was probably introduced via Baramula. The sacred thread passes over the left breast and stomach but now falls just below the line of the skirt. This piece may be dated to the second half of the sixth century.

The Pandrethan Hindu sculptures mostly date from the first half of the seventh century and are roughly contemporaneous with an important group of Buddhist sculptures. The style is characterized by a heavy, fleshy treatment of the body and face and bold ornamentation on a large scale as if in reaction to the restrained tone of the earlier styles. The style of this period is the precursor of the classical art of the eighth-ninth centuries. One piece may be dated to the sixth century and some of the examples are of a very provincial quality and may be later replacements.

The colossal head of Mahesvara illustrates the characteristic facial type with fleshy pouting lips *Fig. 8* and sharply lidded eyes. A standard treatment of the male and female coiffure may be seen on the principal deities of the Pandrethan sculptures of this period and both are present in this example. The two male ones are similar to the Baramula examples and may derive from there. There are no Vishnu images from this period but the hair treatment must have followed a standard one of a line of short curls beneath the crown which can be seen on early Vishnu images from Baramula and Bejbehara and on two subsidiary Garuda figures accompanying Varahi and Vaishnavi from Pandrethan.

The mother goddess holding up a cup in one hand probably represents Chamunda and is one of *Fig. 10* a group of seven from the site including the one mentioned above. She wears a characteristic waisted tunic with pointed ends open on the left thigh. This garment must have been in common use at the time unlike the iconic chiton used at Bejbehara and it continued to be depicted in sculpture into later periods although the length varied according to fashion. The hair is arranged in a similar way to the Uma head of the Mahesvara above, in two flat wavy sections divided by a centre parting.

8. Head of Mahesvara, Pandrethan; first half of the seventh century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

Fig. 11 The large Ganesha sits on a throne with two crouching lions. In Kashmir and other parts of the western Himalayas, he is invariably depicted in this form and his more familiar vehicle, the rat, never appears. As in other parts of India, he was a very popular subject in sculpture. He may also be dated to the seventh century.

The Buddhist sculptures were recovered from a single stupa in excavations conducted by Daya Ram Sahni in 1918.[6] This is the earliest group of Buddhist sculptures to survive from Kashmir.

Fig. 12 One of the complete pieces, a standing Padmapani, compares directly with a standing Saivite

Fig. 13 figure from the Hindu group in almost every respect. The long beaded necklace compares directly with the long sacred thread of the other which now falls well below the waistband (it subsequently never rises above). The floral garland now more closely resembles the later rendering in the form of an imbricated leaf pattern rather than as overlaid floral segments. These two figures develop directly into the standard bodhisattva and Hindu deity of the classical style of the eighth-ninth centuries.

The Buddhist sculptures from Pandrethan show a number of different features which derive from several sources. The varied treatment of the neckline may be seen as a local innovation from which a distinctive classical treatment later develops.

Fig. 14 The Buddha with the badly damaged head, stands in a flexed pose with the left hand raised at waist level originally holding the corner of his cloak. The pleats of the robe are indicated by 'string folds' which loop towards the right of the body.[7] The sides are rendered in a series of rippling folds. Both treatments may be seen on Gupta Buddha images from Mathura and this again may have been introduced from the north-west via Baramula. The neckline shows an interesting treatment with the material arranged in a series of wide meandering folds.

Fig. 15 The seated Buddha has a similar arrangement of the pleats and a number of wide meandering folds on the hem of the robe on the left knee. The neckline is rendered in a number of tightly twisted cords. The face is badly damaged but the hair is arranged in horizontal rows of curls with a straight hair-line on the brow which is a standard treatment in the group.

The Pandrethan Buddha image gradually evolves into the classical Kashmir Buddha type which emerges at Parihasapura. Unfortunately, there is no intermediate material in stone although a group of bronze sculptures may partly explain the transition.[8]

9. Mother goddess, Bejbehara; second half of the sixth century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar. (*left*).

10. Mother goddess, probably Chamunda, Pandrethan; first half of the seventh century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar. (*right*).

Parihasapura and the Classical Style

Parihasapura, modern Paraspora, was constructed as the court capital of Lalitaditya-Muktapida on a high plateau about nineteen kilometres from Srinagar. The town was richly endowed by the king and his ministers with a number of magnificent Buddhist and Hindu structures which are described in detail in the *Rajatarangini.* The town was later pillaged for building material by Samkaravarman in the late ninth century for the construction of his capital at nearby Patan although the religious buildings seem to have survived up to the fourteenth century.

None of the Hindu images survives and there is no trace of the imposing stone Garuda pillar mentioned by Kalhana. However, a group of Buddhist sculptures was recovered from a large stupa[9] believed to be the one erected by Chankuna, Lalitaditya's Tokharian minister. This is the only group of Buddhist sculptures which can be firmly dated.

These sculptures are all architectural reliefs and are now in bad condition. There is little but enough evidence to indicate the full development of the style. A number of new features can also be identified which were common in the art of Buddhist Central Asia. These features

11. Ganesha, Pandrethan; seventh century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

12. Padmapani, Pandrethan; first half of the seventh century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

13. Saivite deity, Pandrethan; first half of the seventh century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

14. Standing Buddha, Pandrethan; first half of the seventh century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

15. Seated Buddha, Pandrethan; first half of the seventh century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

must have been introduced under the influence of Chankuna who came from an area in the upper Indus Valley in present-day Afghanistan. The Chinese pilgrim Ou-K'ong who arrived in Kashmir in AD 759 also noted that Buddhist Turks (Tokharians) from Central Asia had founded numerous sacred places in Kashmir.

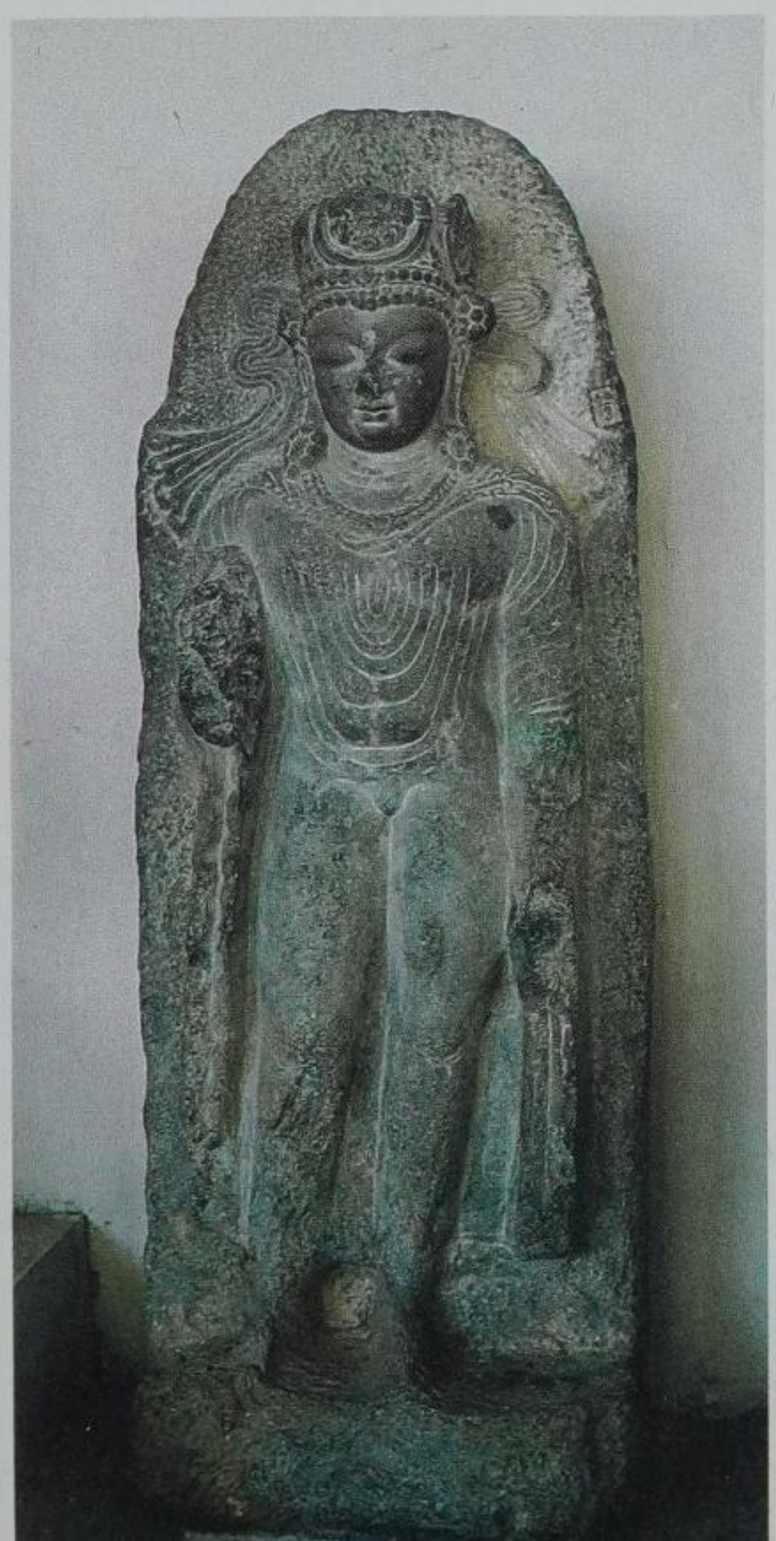
The complete standing crowned Buddha can be taken as a model of the classical Buddha type of Kashmir. The treatment of the body is more restrained and the face is rounder with softer features. The mouth is small and compact and the eyes are almond-shaped with flattened eyelids. An *urna* (the auspicious tuft of hair between the eyebrows) is now visible on the forehead and the curls beneath the crown curve in towards the centre from the sides. *Fig. 16*

The Buddha wears a short necklace, ear-rings and a three-part crown formed of crescents within which are motifs of flowers. The crown is tied at the sides with flying ribbons of a type common in Central Asian art. The crowned Buddha was a popular subject in Kashmir and there are many examples in bronze. The type is peculiar to Kashmir and appears to express an idea of spiritual kingship.

The most important stylistic detail is the treatment of the robe. The pleats which are indicated by incised lines are now arranged in a series of concentric symmetrical loops falling in the centre of the body. The distinctive treatment of the neckline is of great interest and must develop from the type of experimentation seen at Pandrethan. The ends of the robe are thrown back over the shoulders leaving a line of pleated folds on the right shoulder and a V-shape with two diverging lines of folds on the left. This arrangement is easily modified to the mode where the robe covers the left shoulder only. This mode became an almost constant feature of all contemporary and later Buddha images from Kashmir. It almost invariably occurs with the symmetrical pattern of pleats mentioned above and is unique to Kashmir.

Another more abraded Buddha has a similar treatment with the exception of a garment worn on the shoulders. This three-pointed, tasselled mantle or camail with badly damaged sun and moon symbols can be seen at several Central Asian sites such as Bamiyan and Fondukistan. Although it occurs as early as the Kushan period at Mathura and Gandhara, it does not appear in Kashmir before this time and must also have been introduced through the influence of Chankuna and the Turkish Buddhist community. The garment may also be seen at the contemporary Surya temple at Martand. *Fig. 17*

The standing Atlas is a suaver version of the Pandrethan Padmapani. The bold ornamentation has given way to a simpler treatment and the dhoti is depicted in a more sophisticated manner. He wears two sets of necklaces, a short one and another almost reaching his waistline. *Fig. 18*



16. Crowned Buddha, Parihasapura; second quarter of the eighth century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar. (*left*).

17. Crowned Buddha, Parihasapura; second quarter of the eighth century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar. (*right*).

The leaf pattern garland is of a form similar to that of the Padmapani but is slightly longer. The long scarf appears in this form for the first time in stone sculpture although it can be seen on the much earlier Harwan terracotta tiles. It was also very common in Central Asian art which is again the probable source.

The technical brilliance and virtuosity of the Kashmiri sculptors of the time is demonstrated *Fig. 19* by the small Buddha Maradarsana relief panel dated in the year 15 of the cyclical Laukika era corresponding to AD 739.[10] It is carved from a grey chlorite schist usually used for sculptures in the round. It may originally have formed part of a miniature shrine or stupa as a number of miniature shrines have survived to suggest such a tradition. The fine quality of the carving suggests a comparison with the ivories of the period. The work serves as a useful point of cross-reference as the general stylistic features accord with those of the Parihasapura sculptures. The facial type is the same with an *urna* and the hair-line curving in at the centre. The pattern of the pleats on the robe is the same with an identical treatment on the left shoulder. The form of Mara at the Buddha's right is similar to the Atlas figure and both wear a short and a long necklace and the same long scarf which is also worn by the earth goddess, Prithvi, shown below as a half figure with a vase.

Fig. 20 The recently discovered Vishnu Chaturanana is a sculpture of extraordinary quality and sensitivity and must qualify as the finest example of Kashmiri stone sculpture. This form of Vishnu incorporating the heads of the lion and boar incarnations enjoyed great popularity in Kashmir. He holds his attributes, the lotus and conch, in his two principal hands while the missing two originally rested on the heads of his personified mace and wheel. This figure may also be compared with the Parihasapura sculptures. His sumptuous attire includes a short and long necklace like the Atlas figure and his stance and the form of the dhoti compare closely. The elaborate crown is of the same basic form as that of the crowned Buddhas.

This concludes the discussion of the early stone sculpture of Kashmir down to the classical phase in the second quarter of the eighth century. It should be noted that only sculptures recovered in Kashmir proper have been included. A large group of small plaques and miniature sculptures have been found in the general area (referred to briefly in the section on Baramula) but as these were easily portable and their exact provenance is uncertain, they have been excluded from this essay.

18. Atlas figure, Parihasapura; second quarter of the eighth century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

19. Buddha Maradarshana, Kashmir; AD 739. National Museum, New Delhi.

20. Vishnu Chaturanana, Kashmir; *c.* mid-eighth century. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

21. Fertility goddess, Semthan; first/second century; terracotta. Private Collection, London.

22. Head of a bodhisattva, Akhnur; fifth/sixth century; terracotta. British Museum, London.

23. Head of a female attendant, Akhnur; fifth/sixth century; terracotta. British Museum, London.

Terracotta Sculpture

The earliest terracotta finds from Kashmir are from Semthan, ancient Chakradhara, near Bejbehara. A number of sealings and figurines were found there in excavations and as surface finds. These show pronounced Hellenistic features although the face and hair-style have been 'Indianized'. The female figurine may date from the first or second century AD and underlines the *Fig. 21* importance of the north-west in terms of artistic influence at this comparatively early date. A great many terracotta tiles have survived at Harwan but they are discussed elsewhere in this volume.

Two groups of Buddhist sculptures from Kashmir or within the area of Kashmiri influence, are the schools of Akhnur and Ushkur. They have been variously dated between the fifth and eighth centuries and the Akhnur school is usually thought to be the earlier one. They clearly develop from the late Gandhara tradition of stucco sculpture.[11]

Most of the remains are in the form of heads showing a wide variety of type and expression. These heads were produced in basic form from moulds and later added to the bodies. They were then individualized by adding various features such as ear-rings, moustache, beard, hair and head-dress as well as facial lines, and finally they were painted. Their context can be guessed at by comparison with relatively well-preserved sites such as Jaulian at Taxila. They were probably also arranged at various levels around a stupa in small groupings with male and female minor gods and religious and lay devotees attending seated or standing Buddhas or bodhisattvas in niches. They may also have formed part of more complex groups of popular scenes from the life of the Buddha such as the assault of Mara or the Buddha meditating in the Indrasala cave.

The greater plasticity of the material makes a comparison with stone sculpture very difficult. The latter is usually confined to rigid iconographic interpretation whereas terracotta art achieves a greater freedom of expression and draws its inspiration from real life. The artist was able to represent a wide range of emotion and an endless variety of hair-style and head-dress.

Akhnur

This site lies on the right bank of the River Chenab about thirty-two kilometres from Jammu. A great number of heads were found here which are now dispersed in various public collections. The type is quite distinctive with a round plump face and a large head-dress or hair arrangement applied like a wig which shows an influence from the Gupta terracotta tradition. The school may be dated to the fifth/sixth century.

The head of a bodhisattva wears a tightly wrapped turban with the cockade missing. The *Fig. 22* basic form is similar to the standard Gandhara stucco type but this example is richly adorned with gems and rosettes. Instead of wavy hair which is common in Gandhara, a number of tight snail-shell curls show below the sides of the turban.

24. Male head, probably Ushkur; sixth/seventh century; terracotta. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Purchased with Harry and Yvonne Lenart Funds. (*left*).

25. Male head, probably Ushkur; sixth/seventh century; terracotta. British Museum, London. (*right*).

Fig. 23 The female head has the same exuberant quality in the treatment of the head-dress. A floral wreath replaces the more austere leaf wreath common in Gandhara art. She wears a jewelled headband in front and a large rosette with ribbons at the side. She was probably intended as an attendant as her eyes are lowered in reverence.

Ushkur

The name derives from the ancient Hushkapura named after the Kushan king Huvishka who reputedly founded it. It lay on the opposite side of the river to Baramula and was of equal if not more importance to it. Lalitaditya is recorded as having built the great temple of Vishnu Muktasvamin and a large vihara with a stupa here.

A number of heads and fragments were excavated in 1916 from this site which are now in the Sri Pratap Singh Museum. Several other heads have since appeared which may also be attributed to this site. Not surprisingly, the heads show some similarity with the stone sculpture of Baramula in the general shape of the head, in the long arched eyebrows and in the upwardly slanting eyes. They may be dated to the sixth/seventh century.

Fig. 24 The male head compares closely with the Siva head of the Hindu triad. Instead of incised circles for the pupils, they are rendered as flat discs, a feature of a number of heads of this school. The top section of roughly incised hair is clearly applied to the moulded face.

Fig. 25 A second male head with moustache and ear-rings has the same upwardly slanting eyes. The hair is rendered in large carefully modelled snail-shell curls with a straight line across the brow. He wears a curious skull-cap in the form of a multi-petalled flower. He was probably a lay devotee attending a Buddha or bodhisattva.

The few examples of terracotta sculpture from Kashmir suggest that this art form did not enjoy the same popularity as it did in parts of Afghanistan and Central Asia. Despite being comparatively easier to produce, requiring only a source of good clay, skill in moulding and facilities for firing, it never seriously competed with the art of stone sculpture which had the advantage of greater strength and durability.

NOTES

1. P.G. Paul (1986), fig. 40. This is a seated headless Buddha of the fourth-fifth century from Baramula which is remarkably close to stucco Buddha images of the fifth century from Taxila.
2. *Rajatarangini*, I, 312-316.
3. Discussed and dated to the sixth century by P. Pal (1981).
4. R.C. Kak (1933), fig. 59.
5. R.C. Kak (1923), p. 27.
6. D.R. Sahni (1918).
7. In Gandhara, the pleats of the robe invariably loop towards the right of the body which appears to be the source of this mode. At Mathura, in both the Kushan and Gupta periods, two systems of arranging the pleats are employed: towards the right and in the centre of the body.
8. Two bronzes, part of a stylistic group which may originate from Swat, are illustrated in P. Pal (1975), figs. 19 and 20. In this group, the softer facial type approached that of the Kashmir classical style.
9. D.R. Sahni (1918).
10. This relief is published by P.G. Paul (1986), fig. 80 and dated AD 639 partly on the basis of a comparison with several Gupta sculptures. This dating appears far too early as a number of distinctive features such as the treatment of the robe do not appear until the reign of Lalitaditya.
11. Nine terracotta heads from Akhnur in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay are published by M. Chandra (1973). A number of the Ushkur heads are published by R.C. Kak (1933) and P.G. Paul (1986).

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Ivory Sculpture

Stanislaw Czuma

Just as jade is a material commonly associated with China, so is ivory with the Indian world. Not only is it precious by virtue of its limited availability and size, but its "purity," texture, and relative softness make it particularly desirable for sculpture of diminutive size that emphasizes minute details and aims at a high quality of workmanship. In India the tradition of sculpture in ivory goes back to ancient times. Unfortunately, as an organic material, it is easily perishable and consequently few early examples survive to this day.[1] Aside from sporadic examples such as female figurines from Ter in Maharashtra[2] or Pompeii in Italy[3] (which probably served as mirror handles) and larger finds of primarily utilitarian objects from Taxila,[4] it is only the group of Begram ivories[5] that provides a substantial variety of sculptural representations that reflect styles of Indian sculpture dating to the early centuries of the Christian era.

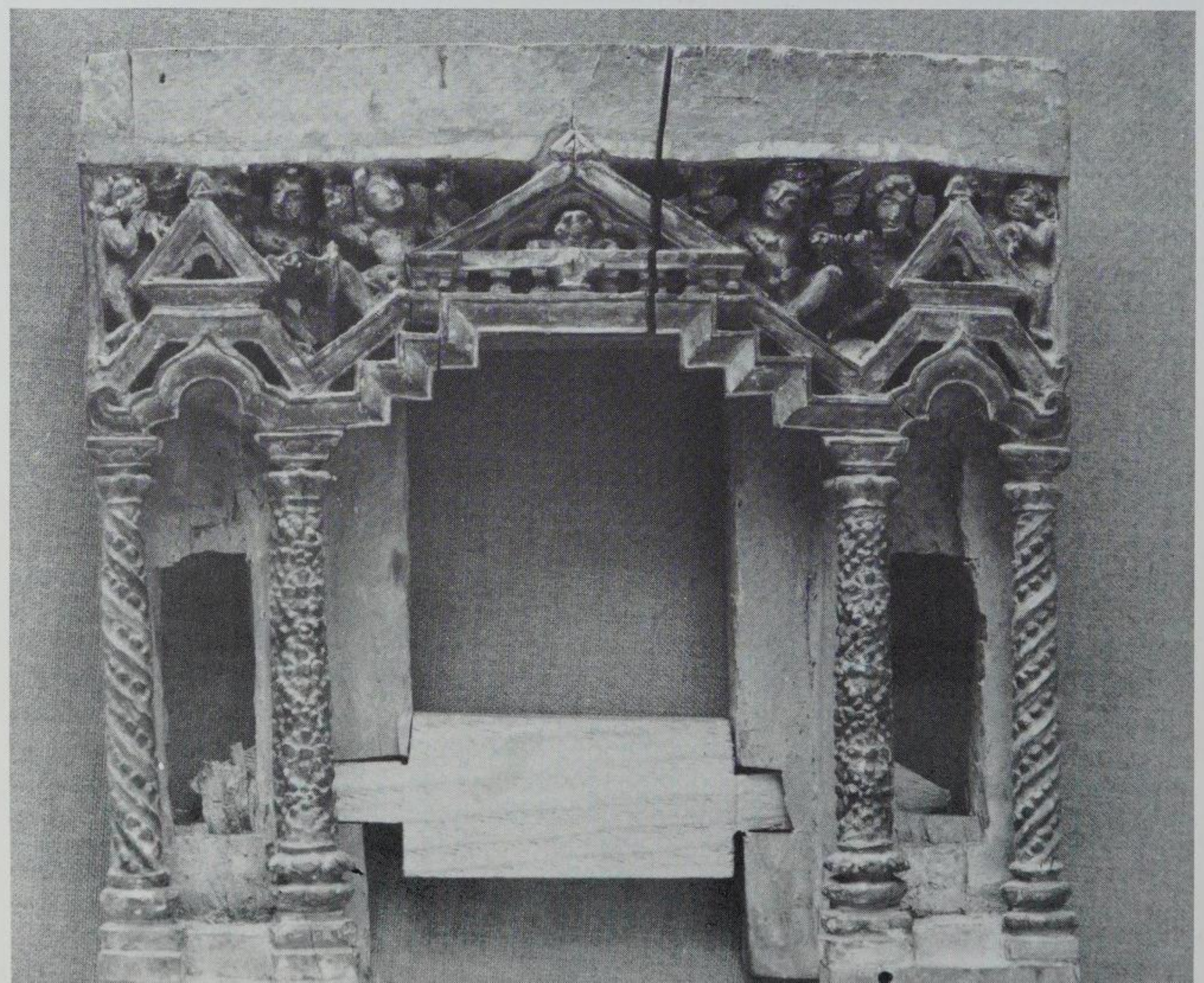
The next comparable group of ivory objects comes from a considerably later period, around the eighth century, from Kashmir.[6] A very active atelier, flourishing in this mountainous kingdom, was responsible for some of the finest ivories produced in the Asian world. While a majority of Begram ivories represent decorative embellishments for boxes and furniture — and consequently are secular in character — the Kashmiri ivories are exclusively religious. In fact, they are limited to Buddhist themes.

The Kashmiri school was not known until the late 1950s, when due to the unstable political conditions and persecution of Buddhist communities in China, some of the rare treasures hidden in the remote monasteries of Tibet found their way to the West.[7] Since the geographic situation of Kashmir and its political fortunes render it vulnerable to conquests, it is not surprising that no products of this school have survived in the Kashmir valley proper. On the other hand, those easily portable works of art found safety from the earlier Muhammadan invasions and historical turmoil in the inaccessible monasteries of the Himalayan range.[8]

Today, a handful of ivories are known that basically represent two types of carvings: the central panel and the narrower, flanking panels with attendants, which together form a portable shrine. This is indicated by objects such as the Kanoria triptych (Figure 1) or the British Museum shrine (see Figure 5) where the ivories are set in an architectural frame made of deodar wood,

1. Shrine, Kashmir; eighth century; ivory and wood; 14 x 14.6 cm. Kanoria Collection, Patna.

2. Wooden frame of Kanoria shrine.



originally painted, with which they form a portable altar.[9] Although most of the surviving ivory carvings were probably set in a similar manner, some—such as the Prince of Wales Museum Buddha with separately carved attending bodhisattvas (see Figure 8)—were conceived directly as a triptych without the use of a wooden frame.

The central panel of those portable altar-pieces (Figures 3, 8, 9, 12, 18, 19), averaging 7.6 to 10.2 centimetres in size (the maximum width allowed by an elephant's tusk) and usually taller than wider, was decorated with the figure of the Buddha, or, on rarer occasions, another major Buddhist deity, such as the bodhisattva in the British Museum shrine (Figures 5, 6). The side figures of attendants, usually somewhat smaller than the central panel, were set in architectural niches, flanking the central image. Their subject varies from representations of the Buddha (Figures 1, 4, 22) or a bodhisattva (Figure 8) to Indra and Brahma (Figure 11) or such attendant figures as the females bearing whisks (*chauri*-bearers) in the Cleveland Museum collection (Figures 5, 7). Side figures of Buddhas are frequently shown in straddling postures, as is the case in the Kanoria shrine (Figures 1, 4) or in smaller fragments of the same iconography currently at the Cleveland and Boston Museums (Figure 22). Those fragments were most likely also parts of a sculptural ensemble, as is indicated by the bevelled edges on one of their sides. In fact, these two fragments, which probably were a pair, may have been used around a plaque such as the one in the Metropolitan Museum (Figure 22) or possibly the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figure 23).[10] They would have formed a triptych like other pieces, but on a more modest scale. On the other hand, there is always a chance that smaller plaques like these may have been used as accompanying pieces for a larger central image. Scenes from the Buddha's life, such as the Eight Great Miracles (*Devavatara*) or events related to the Buddha's seven-week meditation under the bodhi tree, are frequently found on stone steles around the central image of the Buddha.[11] The Metropolitan Museum and Victoria and Albert panels depict the descent of the Buddha from the Tushita Heaven at Sankasya, the sixth of the Eight Great Miracles performed by the Buddha.[12] Another smaller plaque in a private collection in Philadelphia (see Figure 24) indicates that the smaller scale triptychs must have been quite popular.

The attribution of the ivories discussed here to the Kashmiri school was established convincingly by Moti Chandra and Douglas Barrett[13] and consequently does not require further elaboration. Similarly comprehensive was the discussion of the eighth-century date proposed for those pieces by Barrett, which has been accepted by all the authors who have since written on the subject.[14] Therefore, what remains now is simply to summarize the characteristics of this unusual, eclectic style that evolved in Kashmir during that period.

The north-western frontiers of India represent an area that from the earliest times was a meeting point of various cultural influences and was, at the same time, responsible for the

3. Central panel of Kanoria shrine; ivory; approximately 10 cm.

4. Attending Buddhas from Kanoria shrine; ivory.

5. Shrine with Siddhartha, Kashmir; eighth century; ivory and wood; 15.5 x 14.8 cm.
British Museum, London.
Attending *chauri*-bearers. The Cleveland Museum of Art.

6. Shrine with Siddhartha without attendants. British Museum, London.

7. Female *chauri*-bearers; ivory; 7.5 cm. John L. Severance Fund, The Cleveland Museum of Art.

8. Triptych of Buddha and bodhisattvas, Kashmir; eighth century; ivory; 10 x 7.5 cm. Prince of Wales Museum of Western India, Bombay.

dissemination of Indian culture to the outside world. During the early centuries of the Christian era, the territory of Gandhara primarily held this distinction. The series of political events that followed later, beginning with the invasions of the Hunas in the fifth century and continuing with the Muslim raids in the early eighth century, devastated the area, moving the focal point further north-east, to the then politically more stable Kashmir. A new school of sculpture evolved there under the auspices of the Karkota dynasty, which came into prominence sometime during the seventh century,[15] while a related style flourished in the adjoining territory of today's Afghanistan under the patronage of the foreign Hindu Shahi dynasties.

Since Kashmir was once an integral part of the vast Kushan empire,[16] it is not surprising that the Gandhara tradition to a great extent formed the roots of the Kashmiri style. Gandhara is, however, but one factor contributing to this complex style, which is equally strongly influenced by the plasticity and spirituality of Gupta art. Iranian motifs[17] combined with Central Asian and Chinese elements are also frequently present.[18] The stuccos of Fondukistan and the terracottas of Akhnur and Ushkur provide probably the closest stylistic parallels and are frequently cited as precursors of that style.[19]

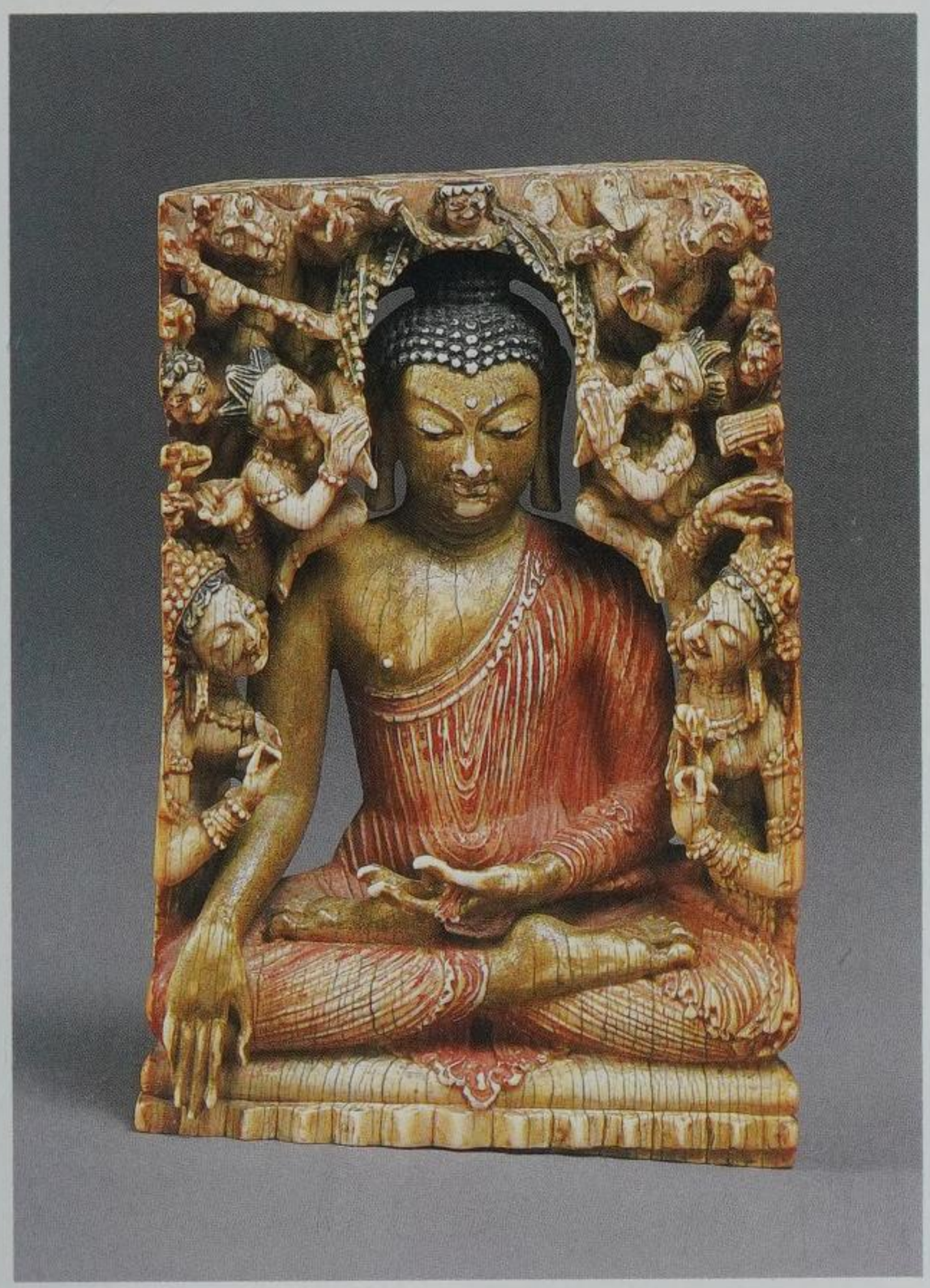
Hermann Goetz in his extensive work on Kashmir[20] justifies this heterogenous character of style by the presence of artists of various foreign backgrounds who found refuge in Kashmir and played an active role in the formulation of this unusual style. Although this is undoubtedly the case, the Kashmiri school absorbed all those influences and transformed them into an idiom that is uniquely Kashmiri. The style thus created is characterized by great elegance and sophistication, with slightly elongated figures that exhibit the naturalistic modelling of Gandhara and the sensuality of Gupta art. It is a style of great technical skill that, particularly in sculpture of diminutive size such as that of ivory, expresses itself in great elaboration and painstaking execution of detail. Its products rival the precision of the goldsmith atelier where each objet d'art displays a jewel-like quality, emphasized by the use of the intricate, open-work (*ajour*) technique.

The beauty of the ivory, which lends itself to a high polish (the result of rubbing it with ivory dust),[21] was further enhanced by paint, traces of which remain on most of the surviving pieces. The paint most frequently found is black lacquer for the hair and details of facial features — such as the eyebrows, eyes, and pupils — while red is used for the lips. The complexion, at least in one instance, the Cleveland piece (Figure 9), is golden.[22] There are indications that the garments were painted too. The garment (*sanghati*) worn by the Cleveland Buddha is ochre-red, which is appropriate to Buddhist monastic custom, while the robes of the British Museum bodhisattva retain traces of turquoise colour (see Figure 5) as does Indra (Figure 11) and the *chauri*-bearers (see Figure 7).

The ivories, particularly those where the polychromy does not survive (Figures 18, 19) but also others, display an attractive, deep-brown patination. The rubbed off, faded colouring combined with the natural patination probably makes them far more appealing to us today than would have their original coat of bright paint. In a way, the result is similar to that witnessed in Gandharan stuccos, where the process of aging, responsible for the loss of the original intense polychromy, helped to achieve a more subdued and refined effect. Another advantage in the case of the ivories is that in their present condition they reveal still more clearly their carvers' skill.

The Kashmiri style as represented in the ivories probably evolved by the eighth century, reaching its peak under the rule of the powerful monarch of the Karkota dynasty, Lalitaditya-Muktapida (b. AD 699, r. *c.* 725-756). Lalitaditya, who established a mighty political empire and for a time prevented the further spread of Islam on the subcontinent,[23] had as his vassals the Shahi rulers of Afghanistan. He defeated Yashovarman of Kanauj and through several conquests extended his political authority over much of northern India from Panjab to West Bengal and over Western Tibet and Eastern Turkistan.[24] A monarch of magnitude and intellect, he patronized the arts. The historical chronicle of Kashmir — *Rajatarangini*, compiled in the twelfth century by Kalhana — records those cultural activities, pronouncing Lalitaditya responsible for the major structures of his new capital, Parihasapura (now mostly in ruins),[25] the Sun Temple at Martand, and other important monuments.[26]

The architectural features present in the deodar shrines of the Kanoria and the British Museum pieces (Figures 1, 2, 5, 6) provide a meaningful comparison with the elements found in some of those edifices. The niche arrangement with cusped or stepped arches supported by highly decorative columns, and crowned by triangular pediments, is a feature commonly present in such Lalitaditya monuments as Martand, Pandrethan, Wangath, Buniar, Narastan, to mention only a few of the most important ones.[27] These elements persisted, however, into the next century and are still found in monuments such as the Avantiswami temple in Avantipur



10. Reverse of figure 9.

9. Panel with Buddha, Kashmir; eighth century; ivory; 13 x 8.9 cm.
The Cleveland Museum of Art, Purchase from the J. H. Wade Fund.

11. Possible reconstruction of the triptych: figure 9 combined with Indra and Brahma, Kashmir; eighth century; ivory; 10.6 and 10 cm. respectively. Private Collection.

built by King Avantivarman in the third quarter of the ninth century.[28]

The same uniformity and consistency of style exist between the ivories and contemporary Kashmiri sculpture in other media. Although stone sculpture shows this similarity,[29] little of it survives. Consequently, most revealing are the comparisons with bronze sculpture, which by their sheer numbers represent this style much more generously than the ivories. The evolution of Kashmiri bronzes has been discussed by Barrett and more recently by Pratapaditya Pal.[30] The sequence proposed by Pal begins with the precursory sixth-century style, which leads to its fully developed form in the eighth century. Little could be added to this careful analysis, except to state that the ivories reflect primarily this mature, eighth-century style. When the ivories are compared to such spectacular bronzes as the seated Buddha from the Norton Simon Museum (Figure 14), which is especially closely related to the Boston Museum ivory (Figure 12),[31] or to such bronzes as the Fatehpur Buddha in the Lahore Museum[32] or the Buddha in the Los Angeles County Museum,[33] this relationship becomes quite obvious.

The sharply defined "Udayana"-type drapery worn by Buddhas and the elaborate thrones, frequently decorated with lions and displaying rock formations, common in these ivories definitely show bronze inspiration. Similarly the round facial features of Buddhas and the sensitive modelling of their bodies with carefully rendered hands and feet are other characteristics that stylistically unite the ivories with bronze sculpture. Additional comparisons between bronzes and ivories—such as Cleveland's Vajrapani (Figure 15) and the demons blowing conches that surround the Buddha in Figure 9, or Surya (Figure 16) and Indra (Figure 11)—point to a close relationship that is evident even in secondary images and details.

This relationship is still noticeable in the period following the eighth century, although it is not as pronounced as before. The magnificent standing Buddha from the Cleveland collection (Figure 17),[34] the Buddha from the Richmond Museum of Fine Arts, or another from the Los Angeles County Museum[35]—which by all indications date to a later period—still reveal a distinct similarity. This implies (analogically as a comparison with architecture) that this style persisted into a later period, although in a somewhat modified version. The Buddhas' draperies get softer with less well-defined folds, and the thrones are simpler. The ivory in the Kronos collection,[36] which is significantly different in style from the ivories discussed here and which probably dates to about the ninth or tenth century, points to the evolution of a later Kashmiri style. Consequently, it is not likely that these ivories date much beyond the eighth century.

While making comparisons with bronzes, I have mentioned the characteristic rock formations

12. Buddha, Kashmir; eighth century; ivory; 14 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

13. Reverse of figure 12.

depicted in most of the ivories that are equally common in bronzes. The Norton Simon Buddha (Figure 14) or the Cleveland Vajrapani bronze (Figure 15) may serve as examples. The textile patterns found on some of the bronzes which relate to ivories, such as the just-mentioned Norton Simon piece or the Fatehpur Buddha,[37] also deserve our attention. They represent the classic fabric designs of that period, found from Afghanistan through the Himalayas to Chinese Turkistan,[38] and provide further evidence for this dating.

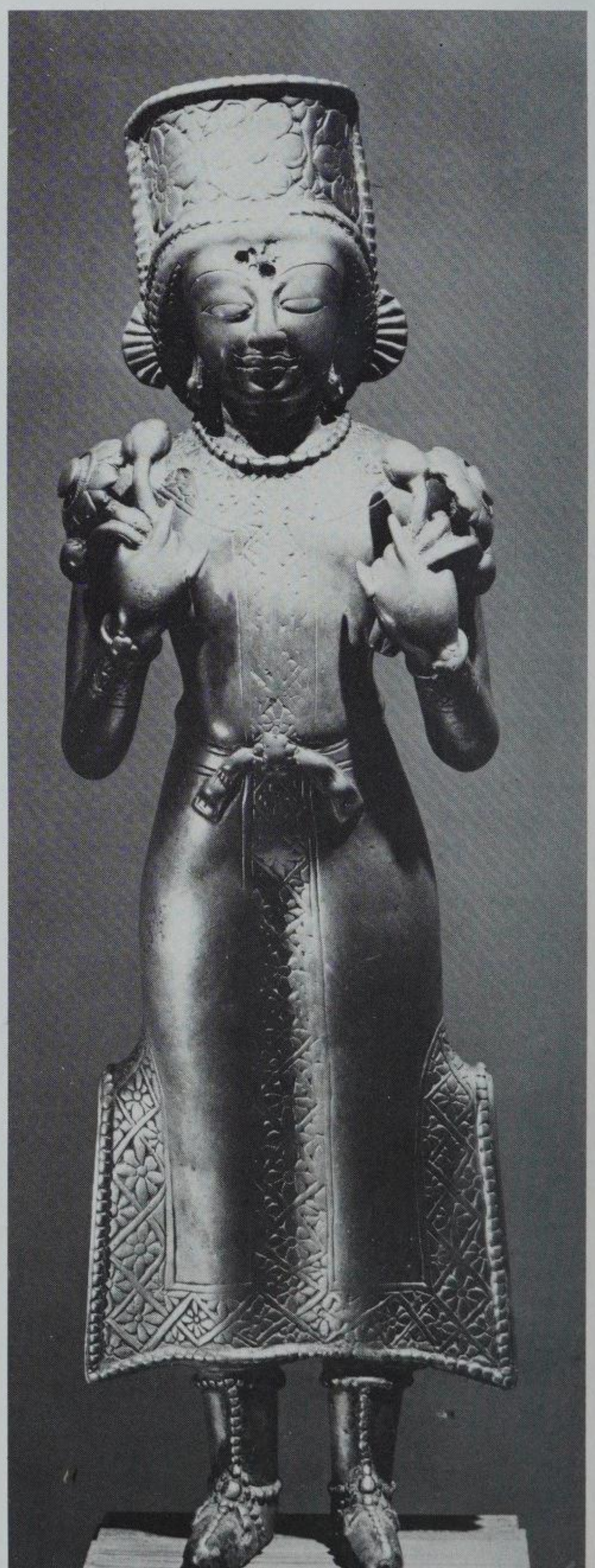
Let us return, however, to a more careful analysis of the extant Kashmiri ivories. The central panels, with the exception of one, the British Museum bodhisattva (Figures 5, 6), show the Buddha seated on a throne or a cushion in the meditating (*dhyanasana*) position, within the trefoil arch. When the throne is present, it is most often supported by lions (Figures 1, 8, 18), appropriate for the Sakya clan from which the Buddha descended, and on one occasion by deer (Figure 8), no doubt a reference to the Buddha's first sermon preached at the Deer Park in Banares. On only one occasion, that of the British Museum bodhisattva, is the base decorated with a group of five musicians (Figures 5, 6). The throne is supported in the centre by a double-*vajra* type object which, like the throne itself, displays a conventional rock structure. It may indicate that the Buddha's seat was meant to represent a natural mountain—the proverbial Mount Meru, which in Indian tradition symbolizes the meeting-place of earth and heaven.

On the other hand, since the same rock patterns are frequently present on some of the panels around the trefoil arch within which the Buddha is seated and in between the figures surrounding the Master, the iconography of these panels is sometimes interpreted as Indra's

14. Buddha, Kashmir; eighth century; brass; 33.7 cm. The Norton Simon Foundation, Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena.

15. Vajrapani, Kashmir; eighth century; bronze; 22 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Purchase from the J. H. Wade Fund.

16. Surya, Kashmir; eighth century; bronze; 50.2 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of Katharine Holden Thayer.



visit to the Buddha when he meditated in the Indrasala cave near Rajgir, where their famous discourse took place. This is enforced further by the presence, in some of the panels, of the seated figure of Indra (recognizable by the *vajra* he holds in his hand) and his harpist, Panchika (holding a harp), flanking the base (Figures 1, 18).

The Buddha image is clad in a monastic garment (*sanghati*), in some cases worn over both shoulders (Figures 1, 8, 18) with the "Udayana"-type drapery arranged around the neck in a collar-like fashion. It adheres closely to the body, modelling the long tapering torso with the broad chest and sloping shoulders. The drapery is rendered fairly realistically around the legs, with some loose ends falling over the Buddha's left thigh and forming an overhanging decorative triangle in the centre of the throne. The hands, with long curving fingers, and the bare feet are treated with great sensitivity.

In other cases, such as the Cleveland panel (Figure 9) and the partially-damaged Boston panel (Figure 12), the *sanghati* is worn in the open mode, that is, over the Buddha's left shoulder with the garment draped over the left hand. The right shoulder and arm, including the right breast, are left uncovered. The collar pleats are preserved on the left side, while the central arrangement of the folds remains the same.

Strangely, both figures shown in the garments worn in the open mode are seated just on a cushioned ledge rather than a throne and their hands express gestures other than that of meditation (*dhyana mudra*), which is common for Buddhas wearing the *sanghati* over both shoulders. The Cleveland Buddha has only the left arm in *dhyana mudra*; the right one makes the earth-touching gesture (*bhumisparsa mudra*), appropriate to the scene depicted here, which refers to the temptation of Buddha by the evil forces of Mara. The arms of the Boston Museum Buddha, on the other hand, are broken off, but their slightly elevated and irregular position indicates that they were most probably in the gesture of preaching the law (*dharmachakra mudra*).[39] All that remains here besides the Buddha's image are fragments of attending figures flanking the Master on both sides. They sit in poses similar to the figures surrounding the Asia Society plaque (Figure 18), with one leg in *padmasana* and the other raised and supported by the *yogapatta* (twisted cloth tied around the waist and the knee of the raised leg). The left figure, which is slightly better preserved, holds his right arm in a gesture simultaneously expressing amusement and adoration. The unique feature of the Boston figure is that it has a sketchily carved back (Figure 13) which is often found in bronze or stone sculpture.[40] All the other ivories are only roughly polished on the reverse (Figures 10, 20) and were obviously only intended to be seen frontally. It should also be pointed out that the attendant figures on the Kanoria shrine (Figures 1, 4), which represent straddling Buddhas, and those on the small panels in the Cleveland and Boston museums (Figure 22) also wear their monastic garb in an open mode.

All the images of the Buddha display the same oval-shaped face with well-pronounced cheeks and chin, semi-closed and almond-shaped eyes, a long pointed nose, gently arched eyebrows with the *urna* between them, and small sensitive lips. Snail-shell curls with the hair-line coming to a point in the centre of the forehead and a high *usnisa* adorn the head. The ears have long pierced earlobes. It is a facial type that has at once affinities with faces found in Central Asian paintings—such as at Qizil or Kucha—as well as in the art of Tang China.[41]

The retinue of figures surrounding the Buddha, although comprising similar types, varies from panel to panel in most of the ivories. Flanking the Buddha's head at the top of the panels are usually figures of ascetics (*siddhas*). Their emaciated looks, hair pulled up in a bun, and a frequently featured beard make them easily recognizable. Surrounding the Buddha image on the sides, gracefully seated in the pose of royal ease, are often figures of four Maharajas, or if one prefers, Lokapalas, the directional guardians who inhabit the Buddhist Paradise (*Sukhavati*) and who are supposed to protect the Buddha. They are usually clad in a loincloth tied around the hips (dhoti) and wear a scarf (*dupatta*) over the shoulders, on some occasions having their raised legs supported by the already-mentioned *yogapatta* (Figure 18). Furthermore, there are *yaksas* with bulging eyes and broad nostrils, garland-bearing celestials, and evil spirits of Mara (especially in Figures 9 and 19, which specifically represent the scene of Buddha's temptation by Mara). Also present in some instances, as mentioned previously, are Indra and Panchika (Figures 1, 18).

All these figures display a great variety of gestures and postures, creating the impression of never-ceasing movement. No figure is ever the same. The gestures depicted express adoration, bewilderment, or submission. This multiplicity of different figures is one of the reasons why the iconography of these panels was never clearly determined, some panels being identified as the temptation of the Buddha by the evil forces of Mara, others as Indra's

17. Buddha, Kashmir; probably early tenth century; brass; 98.1 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, John L. Severance Fund.

visit to Buddha meditating in the Indrasala cave. Chandra has suggested that this varied assembly of gods, demigods, bodhisattvas, and goblins would be justified if the panels were meant to represent an opening verse to the Lotus Sutra (*Suddharma-Pundarika*), a key sutra of Mahayana Buddhism, which was very popular at that time in Kashmir.[42] Indeed, such a possibility is quite likely, especially in the case of the Prince of Wales (Figure 8), Kanoria (Figures 1, 3), and the Asia Society (Figure 18) Buddhas, while the Cleveland panel (Figure 9) obviously depicts the temptation of the Buddha by the evil forces of Mara. The Boston carving (Figure 12), if our conjecture of the hands displaying the *dharmachakra mudra* is correct, alludes to the preaching of the law by the Buddha.

More unusual is the British Museum plaque (Figures 5-7), which until now has been somewhat vaguely identified as a bodhisattva.[43] Although there is no doubt that the figure displays the ornaments and dress of a bodhisattva, there are no attributes permitting his identification with a specific deity (such as Avalokiteshvara for instance, who would have Buddha's image in his crown, as seen in Figure 25). Consequently, the most likely solution is that the image represents Siddhartha himself, frequently found in Afghanistan or Pala art, popularly referred to as the "Bejewelled Buddha." That this iconography gained great popularity around this time in Kashmir is well attested by the numerous Kashmiri bronzes known.[44] Gautama is always shown in them wearing a similar type of three-pointed crown and bedecked with the usual bodhisattva ornaments. As pointed out by Pal, "the idea behind such depictions was to emphasize Buddha's universal kingship . . . ."[45] Siddhartha is shown in the same posture of "royal-ease," with the raised right knee supported by the *yogapatta,* as found elsewhere in the images of Maharajas accompanying the Buddha (Figure 18). His broken right hand is raised and probably displayed the *abhaya mudra;* the left one rests on his bent leg. He is attended by two bodhisattvas, while the assembly of celestials above him and five musicians below seem to announce his spiritual leadership.

Another unusual feature of the British Museum ivory plaque is that, like the Kanoria triptych (Figures 1, 2), it is set into a wooden deodar frame conceived as a shrine. It contains all the architectural elements already discussed, except that the attendant figures (which would have been originally placed in the side niches) are now missing (Figure 6). I am convinced, however, that the pair of female *chauri*-bearers in the Cleveland Museum collection (Figure 7) were originally part of this ensemble. Considering the limited number of surviving Kashmiri ivories, it is quite likely that those that did survive may belong together, forming ensembles, rather than being part of no longer existing sets. In favour of my theory is not only the matching size of those figures for the British Museum shrine but also their precise, delicate execution, which reflects the style of the central panel, as well as traces of the turquoise paint preserved on the garments of both the central plaque and the attendant figures. In fact, I am so convinced that this group belongs together that I arranged to have them assembled and photographed as a unit. The result, I believe, is self-evident (Figure 5).

Similarly, it is possible that the other major pair of attendants from a private collection[46] that depicts one figure in royal costume and another one in a monastic garment (Figure 11), who probably represent Indra and Brahma,[47] belongs with the Cleveland Museum plaque of a seated Buddha (Figure 9). However, since there is no wooden shrine left here, as in the case of the British Museum triptych, and since the original polychromy on the attendant figures is gone (which accounts for the different colouring of the ivories), it is much harder to support this conclusion.

The style, heavier and more massive than most of the ivories known to us, sets them apart, nonetheless, and relates them to one another. The figures in these three pieces are taller and bulkier and the artist does not utilize as much of the *ajour* technique as in other panels (cf. Figures 9-10, 19-20), so that the effect is much more solid, but the highest artistic standard is nevertheless maintained. In terms of proportions, the attendant figures go very well with the Cleveland Museum Buddha, and although they could have formed a triptych, the evidence for this theory is not conclusive enough to claim with certainty that this is the case. What is certain is that if those attendants belong with any of the surviving ivory plaques, it would have to be the one in the Cleveland Museum collection. The only other plaque comparable in style and size to the Cleveland Museum Buddha that could conceivably belong with these attendants is the Boston Museum piece (Figure 12), but the fact that it has a comparatively finished back (Figure 13), while the attendants have not, speaks against matching them. Obviously, if they were a set, meant to be seen from the back, all figures would have been treated the same.

There is little doubt, however, that the two attendant figures belong together. Not only are they identical in size and style, and matching in iconography (if I am correct in my

assumption that they represent Indra and Brahma), but when studying them in the Museum's conservation laboratory, it also became evident that they were carved from the same ivory tusk. The end of the tusk was split down the centre, the sides of the ivories bearing carving originally faced inward. Their polished backs and sides reveal a matching texture.

The most unusual of all the Kashmiri ivory plaques discussed here is the one recently acquired by The Cleveland Museum of Art that depicts a hitherto unknown iconography in Kashmiri ivories—the emaciated Buddha (Figure 19). This very dramatic and expressive depiction, so popular in Gandharan art (Figure 21), was not commonly found outside this school. It must have been considered too gruesome and realistic a subject for the others. That it was known in Kashmir at a later date is not surprising, since Kashmir was once a part of the Kushan domain responsible for Gandharan art. The terracotta fragment from Akhnur that depicts the head of the emaciated Buddha attests this fact.[48] Nonetheless, no complete compositions of this iconographic theme was known until the present example came to light. The latest discovery among the group of Kashmiri ivories that, like others, came through Tibet, it contributes a new aspect to our knowledge of this school.

The Buddha in the centre is depicted as a fasting ascetic. He sits within the trefoil-arched cave in the *dhyanasana* position, that is with his hands folded in his lap in the meditation gesture.

18. Panel, Kashmir; *c.* eighth century; ivory; 9.8 x 7.3 cm. The Asia Society, New York, Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection.

His emaciated body with the conventional but very effective skeletal vein structure and sunken stomach, and his haggard face are the most successful means used by the artist to present the haunting image of an ascetic who overcomes the limitations imposed on him by his human form in order to attain higher spiritual values.

The image of the Master, in accordance with the rules of the "continuous narration," is shown three times, that is, two figures of the Buddha flank the central image. On the left, he is shown once more in his emaciated form with his head resting on his right hand supported by the left raised knee, as if exhausted after long austerities. The female figure immediately below him seems to offer him a rice-filled bowl (like those used by Buddhist monks to beg for food). It may well represent Sujata, who provided Buddha's first meal at the conclusion of his austerities. Here, however, he seems to be oblivious, simply ignoring her offer. On the right, he is seated in the "European pose" (*pralambapadasana*) with his legs pendant from the throne, supported by a lotus.[49] Once again well nourished, he is here attired in monastic garb, indicating that he has achieved enlightenment. He now holds his begging bowl in the palm of his left hand, while his right, partially broken, is raised to his open mouth in the gesture of eating. Next to him is another female figure, probably Sujata, who provided the meal. The three Buddhas sit on a rocky, cushioned podium, like those seen in other panels. There are also rock formations among the figures that hover above the central images, suggesting a cave setting. Present, as in other panels, are the celestial attendants on the top, the usual heads of ascetics (*siddhas*) framing the arch, and a multiplicity of yaksha and dwarf-like

19. Panel with emaciated Buddha, Kashmir; eighth century; ivory; 12.4 x 9.5 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Leonard C. Hanna, Jr. Fund.

20. Reverse of figure 19.

figures which most likely represent the temptation of Buddha by the evil forces of Mara.

The scene below, although partially damaged in the centre, looks like an ordinary "genre" scene with multiple figures involved in an energetic discussion—as indicated by the variety of expressive gestures. Since cows are present and some figures seem to be involved in the churning of butter (*ghi*), it is conceivable that the scene depicts the household of Sujata's father (who was a cowherd), where the story of Buddha's enlightenment is discussed in vivid terms. On the other hand, it may just depict villagers and their herd paying homage to the Buddha.

The panel is a superb example of refined workmanship, even more intricate and delicate than most. This ivory employs a richer *ajour* technique than other pieces, as is particularly noticeable on the reverse side (cf. Figures 10, 20) where the perforated areas create a lacelike effect. As is the case with other ivories, the plaque curves slightly, following the tusk's natural contour. There are no traces of paint in this instance or in the Asia Society ivory (Figure 18), which may indicate that both pieces were cleaned at one point. The ivory has a rich brown patination. When found, it was stored in a wooden box that looked like a hollowed-out book cover, displaying signs of some age, although certainly later than the ivory itself. There is little doubt, however, that the panel was probably originally set in a wooden shrine similar to those in the Kanoria and the British Museum ivories (Figures 1-2, 5-6).

The one remaining ivory, not discussed so far, is that of a single figure representing the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, in the Prince of Wales Museum. Like the Prince of Wales Museum (Figure 25) triptych, however, it has been discussed in depth by both Chandra and Vinod Dwivedi.[50] Although in posture and type it is not very different from the attending bodhisattvas in the Prince of Wales Museum triptych (Figure 8), it is much larger and, therefore, may have been conceived as an individual figure. Although it is difficult to tell the basis for Chandra's suggestion that it was carved from the same tusk as the Prince of Wales Museum triptych, one could easily imagine this to be the case. The shape of the figure, narrowing toward the top, suggests that the end of the tusk was used, as was usually the practice with the attendant figures (cf. Figure 11).

In closing, it is fair to say that all the Kashmiri ivories discussed here reveal a similar style, suggesting that they are products of the same atelier. That style, as compared with contemporary Kashmiri sculpture in other media and architecture, indicates primarily an eighth-century date with the possibility of extending into the following century. As suggested, most of the ivories were created as portable shrines set in a wooden, architectural frame. In some instances, the wooden frames may not have been used, as attested by the Prince of Wales Museum triptych, and occasionally individual figures may have been produced, as indicated by the Prince of Wales Museum Avalokiteshvara. The ivories and their wooden shrines were originally painted.

The exclusively Buddhist subject-matter of these ivories is basically limited, in the case of the central panel, to the seated Buddha image in various stages of his quest of enlightenment. This central image of Buddha is surrounded by the retinue of bodhisattvas, sages, worshippers, or evil spirits, sometimes alluding to specific events, such as the temptation of Buddha by the evil forces of Mara, or the visit of Indra to Buddha meditating in a cave. Narrower panels with the figures of various attendants flank the central panel.

As more Kashmiri ivories come to light, our knowledge of this school will surely increase. The most recent acquisition, the ivory plaque with the fasting Buddha, offers the promise that other pieces may be forthcoming in the future, which will further enrich our understanding of this fascinating and highly accomplished school.

NOTES

1. The literary evidence to this effect, as well as a review of the earliest remaining objects in historical sequence, is provided by: Moti Chandra, "Ancient Indian Ivories," *Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum,* no. 6 (1957-1959), pp. 4-36; and Vinod P. Dwivedi, *Indian Ivories* (Delhi, 1976), pp. 16-95.
2. Chandra, "Ancient Indian Ivories," figs. 3a and b, 4a; Dwivedi, *Indian Ivories,* figs. 38, 54-55; *Dawn of Civilization in Maharashtra, An Exhibition of Archaeological Finds in Maharashtra of the Prehistoric Period to the Third Century AD* (Bombay: The Prince of Wales Museum, 1975), no. 27.
3. Chandra, "Ancient Indian Ivories," fig. 1a; Dwivedi, *Indian Ivories,* figs. 41-42; Jean P. Vogel, "Note on an Ivory Statuette from Pompeii," *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology,* 13 (Leiden: Kern Institute, 1938), pp. 1-5; A. Maiuri, "Statuette Eburnea di Arte Indiana a Pompeii," *Le Arti,* 1 (1939), pp. 11-115; Mario Bussagli, "The Archaeological Aspect of Asiatic Contacts with Italy," *East and West,* 1 (1950), pp. 13-17; D'Ancona, "An Indian Statuette from Pompeii," *Artibus Asiae,* 13 (1950), pp. 166-180; E. C. L. During Caspers, "The Indian Ivory Figurine from Pompeii—A Reconsideration of Its Functional Use," *South Asian Archaeology: Papers of the International Conference of the Association of South Asian Archaeologists* (London, 1979), pp. 341-353.
4. Objects such as ornaments, beads, hairpins, combs, and mirror handles. See Chandra, "Ancient Indian Ivories,"

21. Emaciated Buddha, Gandhara; second-third century; stone. Lahore Museum.

22. Suggested reconstruction of a triptych with: Descent of Buddha from Tushita Heaven at Sankasya (central panel), Kashmir; eighth century; ivory; 6.2 x 3.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Attending Buddhas; ivory; 4.7 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (left), and The Cleveland Museum of Art, Purchase from the J. H. Wade Fund (right).

23. Descent of Buddha from Tushita Heaven at Sankasya, Kashmir; eighth century; ivory; 6.3 x 4.5 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

24. Buddha, Kashmir; *c.* eighth century; ivory; 5.1 x 2.5 cm. Private Collection, Philadelphia.

figs. 1b, 5b; Dwivedi, *Indian Ivories,* figs. 46-52; Sir John Marshall, *Taxila,* 3 vols. (Cambridge: The University Press, 1951), 2: chap. 32, pp. 651-666, 3: pls. 199-200, 203-204.

5. Joseph Hackin, *Recherches Archéologiques à Begram,* 2 pts., Mémoires de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan, vol. 9 (Paris: Les Editions d'Art et d'Histoire, 1939); Joseph Hackin, *Nouvelles Recherches Archéologiques à Begram,* 2 pts., Mémoires de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan, vol. 11 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale Presses Universitaires, 1954); J. L. Davidson, "Begram Ivories and Early Indian Sculpture: A Reconsideration of Dates," *Aspects of Indian Art* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), pp. 1-4; Elisabeth S. Rosen, "The Begram Ivories," *Marsyas,* 17 (1974-1975), pp. 39-48.

6. Published (in chronological order) by the following writers: Chandra, "Ancient Indian Ivories," pp. 36-48, figs. 6-10; Douglas Barrett, "A Note on Ivories and a Review of the *Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India,* no. 6 (1957-1959)," *Lalit Kala,* 10 (October, 1961), pp. 56-58; idem, "Façade of a Miniature Shrine from Kashmir," *The British Museum Quarterly,* 34 (1969-1970), pp. 63-67; Milo Beach, "Two Indian Ivories Newly Acquired," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,* 62 (1964), pp. 95-101; Frederick M. Asher, "Buddhist Ivories from Kashmir," *Oriental Art,* 18, no. 4 (Winter, 1972), pp. 367-373; Vinod P. Dwivedi, "Ivories of North-West India," in *Aspects of Indian Art* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), pp. 70-77, pls. XXXVII-XL; idem, *Indian Ivories,* pp. 100-106.

7. This is equally true of ivories as it is of bronzes (see Pratapaditya Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir* [Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1975], p. 9; Sherman E. Lee, "Clothed in the Sun: A Buddha and Surya from Kashmir," *CMA Bulletin,* 54 [1967], pp. 43-63).

8. Dwivedi, "Ivories of North-West India," pp. 71-72.

9. Martin Lerner (*The Flame and the Lotus* [New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1984], p. 72) suggests that there are "less than three dozen" ivories known, but my knowledge of existing pieces does not bring the number that high. In fact, if counted not as separate pieces but as "ensembles," there are no more than a dozen. It has been also suggested (Susan L. Huntington, *The Art of Ancient India* [New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1985], p. 369, pl. 13) that this wooden frame "was part of a set of Buddhist scenes that adorned the drum of a votive stupa."

25. Avalokiteshvara, Kashmir; eighth century; ivory; 14 cm. Prince of Wales Museum of Western India, Bombay.

10. This suggestion was made before by Beach in "Two Indian Ivories," p. 99, and by Martin Lerner in *Notable Acquisitions: Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1979-1980), p. 66.
11. Pratapaditya Pal, "The Story of Wandering Bronze Buddha and Two Examples from American Collections," *The Connoisseur,* 181 (November, 1972), pp. 203-207; Stanislaw Czuma, *Indian Art from the George P. Bickford Collection,* exh. cat. (Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1975), fig. 33.
12. The Metropolitan ivory was formerly in the George P. Bickford Collection and this iconography was suggested earlier (Czuma, *Indian Art from the George P. Bickford Collection,* fig. 33, and Dwivedi, *Indian Ivories,* p. 103).
13. Chandra, "Ancient Indian Ivories," pp. 40-48; Barrett, "Note on Ivories," and "Façade of a Miniature Shrine."
14. Barrett, "Note on Ivories," and "Façade of a Miniature Shrine," and see note 6 above.
15. Hermann Goetz, "The Beginnings of Mediaeval Art in Kashmir," reprinted from *Journal of the University of Bombay,* 21, pt. 2 (September, 1952), pp. 63-94, esp. p. 67.
16. M. Aurel Stein, trans., *Kalhana's Rajatarangini,* 2 vols. (Delhi-Varanasi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1961), 1:76.
17. Such as costume, head-dress, and textile patterns (see Lee, "Clothed in the Sun," p. 44, nn. 6 and 7).
18. Compare broad facial types found in paintings along the Silk Route (*Along the Ancient Silk Routes: Central Asian Art from the West Berlin State Museums,* exh. cat. [New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982], pls. 24, 27, 39, 60-61, 85, 90, 121) or in the art of Tang China (Basil Gray, *Buddhist Cave Paintings at Tun-huang* [London: Faber & Faber, 1959], pls. 29, 38-40).
19. Chandra, "Ancient Indian Ivories," p. 44; Barrett, "Note on Ivories," p. 57. See also Charles Fabri, "Akhnur Terracottas," *Marg,* VIII, no. 2 (March, 1955), pp. 53-64.
20. Goetz, "Beginnings of Mediaeval Art in Kashmir," pp. 73, 84.
21. Dwivedi, *Indian Ivories,* p. 13.
22. There is always a chance that it may have been repainted at a later date, although the technical examination seems to indicate that the paint is contemporary with the ivory.
23. Arabs overran Syrian and Egyptian provinces of Byzantium in AD 634-638 and the Sassanian empire in AD 637-647, after which they proceeded further east.
24. Goetz, "Beginnings of Mediaeval Art in Kashmir," pp. 68-71 and 94.
25. The old town abandoned in favour of Parihasapura was Pravarapura, within the radius of modern Srinagar (Goetz, "Beginnings of Mediaeval Art in Kashmir," p. 91). The main monuments of the new capital for which Lalitaditya was responsible include: the Great Stupa of his Tokharian prime minister, Chankuna (Tsian-kiun); the Rajavihara and Lalitaditya's *Chaitya*, famous for its colossal copper Buddha image which it once enshrined (ibid., pp. 74-79).
26. Stein, trans., *Kalhana's Rajatarangini,* Bk. iv, lines 186 ff. (pp. 139 ff.) and intro., p. 92.
27. Ram Chandra Kak, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir* (London: The India Society, 1933), pls. XLIV, LII-LIII, LX, LXIV, LXXVI; Goetz, "Beginnings of Mediaeval Art in Kashmir," pp. 81, 85-89.
28. Kak, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir,* pls. LXIX, LXXI-LXXII.
29. Goetz, "Beginnings of Mediaeval Art in Kashmir," figs. 15, 17, 19.
30. Douglas Barrett, "Bronzes from Northwest India and Western Pakistan," *Lalit Kala,* no. 11 (April, 1962), pp. 35-44; Pratapaditya Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir* (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1975), esp. pp. 30-35.
31. The comparison has already been made by Pal (*Bronzes of Kashmir,* fig. 22, p. 92).
32. The Fatehpur Buddha, first published by Jean Philipe Vogel ("Inscribed Brass Statuette from Fatehpur [Kangra]," *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report* [1904-1905], pp. 107-109) was originally dated by him on paleographic grounds primarily to the sixth century. Some writers (Lee, "Clothed in the Sun," pp. 43-63, fig. 2) followed Vogel in this dating. Barrett ("Bronzes from Northwest India," pp. 36-37), however, in my estimation correctly assigned it to the eighth century.
33. Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir,* fig. 21.
34. It was suggested that the Cleveland Museum Buddha dates to the tenth (Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir,* fig. 26, p. 100, and Heather Karmay, *Early Sino Tibetan Art* [Warminster: Aris & Philips Ltd., 1975], pp. 29-30) rather than the eighth century (Lee, "Clothed in the Sun," pp. 44-46, fig. 3).
35. Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir,* figs. 24 and 33 (cf. the latter to the Buddha seated in the "European pose" to the right of the centre image in figure 19 here).
36. Lerner, *The Flame and the Lotus,* fig. 26.
37. See note 32 above.
38. *Silk Road: Chinese Silks from the Han and T'ang Dynasties (Ssu-ch'ou chih lu: Han T'ang chih-wu),* Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region Museum (Peking: Cultural Relics Publication, 1972), pl. 39; *The Quest for Eternity,* exh. cat. (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1987), figs. 67-68 (see the pattern on the horse's harnesses); also Benjamin Rowland, *Art in Afghanistan, Objects from the Kabul Museum* (London: The Penguin Press, 1971), fig. 105; Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir,* fig. 17.
39. Published by Beach, "Two Indian Ivories," and Jan Fontein and Pratapaditya Pal, *Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: Oriental Art* (Boston, 1969), fig. 122, p. 190. When originally acquired, the Boston ivory did not have the head which was in the Cleveland collection; after it was determined that the pieces belonged together, the Boston Museum obtained it from Cleveland by exchange.
40. Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir,* figs. 21, 22.
41. See note 18 above.
42. Chandra, "Ancient Indian Ivories," p. 41.
43. Barrett, "Façade of a Miniature Shrine."
44. Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir,* figs. 29-33.
45. Ibid., pp. 24-25.
46. Published in Asher, "Buddhist Ivories from Kashmir," pls. V, VI; Dwivedi, *Indian Ivories,* figs. 83-84; idem, "Ivories of North-West India," pls. XXXIX, XL; Huntington, *Art of Ancient India,* p. 369, fig. 17.20.
47. They were previously identified as Manjushri and Buddha (Dwivedi, *Indian Ivories,* and "Ivories of North-West India"), as Manjushri and the Buddha's disciple Sariputra, who was instrumental in Buddha's revealing the Lotus of the True Law (Asher, "Buddhist Ivories from Kashmir"), and as Indra and Brahma (Huntington, *Art of Ancient India*). I believe that they represent Indra and Brahma, who frequently accompany images of Buddha even as early as Kushan art (Stanislaw Czuma, *Kushan Sculpture: Images from Early India,* exh. cat. [Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1985], nos. 12-15).
48. Fabri, "Akhnur Terracottas," fig. 17.
49. *Pralambapadasana,* translated literally, means "seated with extended legs." It is interesting to compare this image with the Kashmiri bronze of the Buddha in the same position (Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir,* fig. 33).
50. Chandra, "Ancient Indian Ivories," pp. 37-39; Dwivedi, *Indian Ivories,* pp. 101-102. □

Metal Sculpture

Pratapaditya Pal

Introduction

> He had used eighty-four Tolakas of gold for the figure of Muktakesava. The very same number of Palas of silver the pure-minded one collected and constructed the holy Parihasakesava. Further, with as many thousand Prasthas of brass he founded a colossal statue of the blessed Buddha which filled the heavens.[1]

So wrote Kalhana, the twelfth-century historian, about some of the images in temples founded by the great Kashmiri monarch Lalitaditya-Muktapida (*c.* AD 725-750). Thus, by the eighth century, not only was the art of casting metal images of impressive size flourishing in Kashmir, but the passage also demonstrates that unlike elsewhere in India, the Kashmiris were fond of installing a metal sculpture as the principal icon in their temples. This practice is corroborated by the surviving temples in neighbouring Chamba in Himachal Pradesh. The majority of the icons worshipped in Chamba temples today, some of which are earlier than Lalitaditya's time, are made of brass. Unfortunately, from Kashmir proper, only one or two large brass images have survived, and none in gold or silver. Impressive brass sculptures in Chamba and Tibet, some of which are as tall as one metre or more, however, do provide some idea of the colossal statues that Kalhana wrote about. Some were melted down even before Kalhana, and others must have been destroyed in subsequent wars.

That Kashmir had a distinct tradition of metal sculptures was recognized only about three decades ago. Although as early as 1904-05 a Kashmiri bronze Buddha was published by Vogel, neither he, nor Coomaraswamy two decades later, recognized it as Kashmiri as it was found in Fatehpur, Kangra.[2] Also, in the early part of the century, Louis Clarke who was a distinguished director for many years of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England, unwittingly picked up a few Swat bronzes in the Kashmiri style from the bazaar in Peshawar, which are now in the British Museum. In 1923 R. C. Kak, the superintendent of the Department of Archaeology of the Kashmir State, published the now well-known Queen Didda bronze but had no comments to offer about a Kashmiri bronze tradition. It was in the early fifties that the German scholar Goetz first wrote about Kashmiri bronzes when he published an article on the spectacular Devsar frame which remains the most impressive evidence of large metal images that were once the pride of Kashmir.[3] Goetz's discussion, however, is confined only to this particular piece, and it was left to Douglas Barrett of the British Museum in the early sixties to establish firmly a Kashmiri tradition of bronze casting.[4] The first monograph on the

Figs. 1,2

Fig. 3

bronzes of Kashmir written by this contributor did not appear until the mid-seventies.[5] Since then a good deal has been written on the subject, as a large number of Kashmiri style bronzes has emerged mostly from Tibetan monasteries. The total corpus of Kashmiri metal sculptures is not only impressive but it also demonstrates that the region was as prolific under the Karkota and Utpala dynasties as Bihar and Bengal were during the Pala-Sena periods and Tamil Nadu under the Chola dynasty.

Unlike the other two regions mentioned where a copper alloy was preferred, the Kashmiri sculptors were partial to brass, which was often inlaid with silver and copper.

1. Enthroned Buddha; eighth century; brass. Lahore Museum.

2. Reverse of figure 1.

This was also popular among the Jains of Western India. Curiously, all the Kashmiri metal sculptures discovered so far depict Buddhist and Hindu deites, and no Jain sculpture has yet been found either from Kashmir or in the Kashmiri style from adjoining regions. Most Buddhist bronzes have emerged from monasteries in Western Tibet, where Kashmiri images were in great demand. Some large bronzes from Western Tibet have also survived that were rendered in a strongly Kashmiri style, and both stylistic and technical analyses now help us to distinguish between bronzes made in Tibet and those made in Kashmir and transported to Tibet.[6]

Although many of the Kashmiri bronzes are inscribed, unfortunately only a few can be securely dated. One is the small bodhisattva group in the Srinagar museum that was dedicated in the reign of Queen Didda (r. AD 980-1003). A second datable metal sculpture is the elaborate Vaishnava altar-piece in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art dedicated in the reign of King Sukhapurna. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, Sukhapurna was very likely King Avantivarman's father, which would provide a date of *c.* AD 850 for this sculpture.[7] *Fig. 3* *Fig. 5*

3. Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara with consorts; AD 980-1003; brass with silver inlay; 25 cm. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

Fig. 4 A third probability is the magnificent Cleveland Buddha which, according to its Tibetan inscription, was the personal image of Lhatsun Nagaraja, who is generally identified as a pious prince of Guge who lived in the eleventh century. If the bronze was made for him, then a date around AD 1000 would have to be assigned to this bronze. Others, however, consider this to be an earlier bronze, as early as the eighth century, but this is unlikely. In any event, one can be certain that the bronze could not have been created after AD 1050. Thus the dating of Kashmiri bronzes is based primarily upon a comparison with stone sculptures *in situ*, though here also the surviving material does not help us to be too precise.

Exactly when metal sculptures began to be produced in Kashmir is not known, but very likely both the technique and the inspiration came from neighbouring Gandhara. The few bronzes that can be attributed to pre-Karkota Kashmir or the early years of Karkota rule are, like contemporaneous stone sculpture, closely related to Gandhara bronzes. Also, the surviving early bronzes are small, but as is clear from Kalhana's description, by the first half of the eighth century the focus had shifted from Gandhara to Kashmir, which now became the leading centre of metal casting in the north-western region of the subcontinent. Accounts of Chinese pilgrims such as Hsuan Tsang (AD 600-644) make it clear that by the seventh century Gandhara had ceased to be a leading centre of Buddhism. Certainly during Lalitaditya's reign Kashmir was the major political force in the region, and his successful conquests beyond the confines of the Valley must have brought in enormous wealth. A large number of temples and monasteries were built by him and his Tocharian prime minister Chankuna, as well as by other members of the royal family and important nobles. It is not improbable that Lalitaditya established a royal workshop to cast his colossal statues.

Significantly, a group of impressive bronzes have survived in neighbouring Chamba which were all cast by a master sculptor named Gugga. While the exact date when he flourished is not known, the likely period is the first quarter of the eighth century. Almost certainly Chamba was a vassal state of Kashmir at the time, for Lalitaditya's conquests extended as far east as Kanauj in Uttar Pradesh. Thus, it is highly probable that sculptors such as Gugga or his immediate descendants would have either voluntarily or under compulsion moved to Kashmir to work for the new overlord.[8] Sculptors from other parts of the subcontinent too may have flocked to Kashmir. Kashmiri bronzes of the Karkota period are often richly inlaid with silver and copper, a practice that was already well known both in Sind and Gujarat, where the Jains patronized a flourishing tradition of metal sculpture. Mention may be made of the Akota hoard and the magnificent inlaid brass image of Brahma found in Sind and now in Karachi.[9] Considered to be a sixth-seventh century sculpture, both for style and size the bronze provides a possible forebear of the colossal bronzes of Lalitaditya. It is well known that by AD 400 Kashmir had already become a famous centre of learning, and it remained so throughout the Karkota period. That it should have attracted artists and architects during the glorious days of Lalitaditya and his successor Jayapida (*c.* AD 770-801) should not be surprising.

Karkota Period (*c.* AD 600-855)

Few bronzes of the early Karkota period have survived and are of rather modest size. By and large, the early Kashmiri bronzes of the sixth-seventh century reveal vestiges of
Figs. 6,7 the Gandhara tradition as well as influences of Gupta aesthetic. This is clearly evident in two small but charming bronzes of the seventh century. One represents the Hindu god Ganesha and the other Buddha Sakyamuni. In both bronzes, the pedestals are clearly derived from Gandhara images. Plain, moulded rectangular bases are common in Gandhara bronzes, while thrones supported by animals and atlantes are frequently encountered in Gandhara stone images. The stylish elegance and swagger of Ganesha, using his battle-axe like a walking stick, as well as the suave modelling of the Buddha, are on the other hand features that are more typical of Gupta period sculptures. The plain circular nimbus of the Buddha, however, is a survival of the Gandhara tradition and continued to be popular with Kashmiri sculptors well into the Utpala period. The shape of the Buddha's face, the puffed and fleshy cheeks, the small but full lower lip as well as the large staring eyes are characteristics of Kashmiri figures and they remain so for the next six centuries. The inlaying of the eyes and the *urna* (auspicious circle between the eyebrows) is also another feature of Kashmiri metal sculpture that is rare in earlier Gandhara bronzes but is quite common in bronzes from both Kashmir and Swat generally attributed to the sixth-seventh century.

While stone sculptures and temples can with some certainty be associated with Karkota

rulers, especially the great Lalitaditya, no inscribed metal sculpture has yet yielded his name or that of most other Kashmiri monarchs. Several bronzes do bear inscriptions with dates, which however cannot be converted to any known era with assurance.[10] A number of metal sculptures, though, can be attributed broadly to the eighth century, when under both Lalitaditya and his grandson Vinayaditya Jayapida, Kashmir was a significant political and cultural entity.

One of the finest Kashmiri bronzes, probably of the Lalitaditya period, is the inscribed Buddha that was found around the turn of the century in Fatehpur, Kangra. First regarded as a sixth-century Buddha, it is now generally considered to be of the eighth century. It is very likely that the bronze, along with numerous copies, was modelled after an important stone image in one of the monasteries built by Lalitaditya or Chankuna. The elaborate throne with columns, *yakshas*, lions and griffins are simply metal versions of stone bases that have been recovered from Chankuna's monastery in Parihasapura, Lalitaditya's capital. Especially significant is the carpet on which the Buddha sits. Seen with greater clarity in the more elaborate Norton Simon altar-piece, it is a design commonly encountered in Central Asian murals and textiles. That Chankuna's Buddha would be made to sit on such a Central Asian rug should not be surprising.

Figs. 1,2

see Ivories Fig. 14

As a matter of fact, the bearded kneeling figure holding a garland and wearing a long coat on the extreme right of the pedestal of the Norton Simon bronze may represent Chankuna himself. I had elsewhere suggested that the kneeling figure in front of him may represent King Jayapida, but he may even portray Lalitaditya. There seems no doubt that this extraordinary altar-piece is a royal benefaction and the two kneeling figures on the inside depict a king and

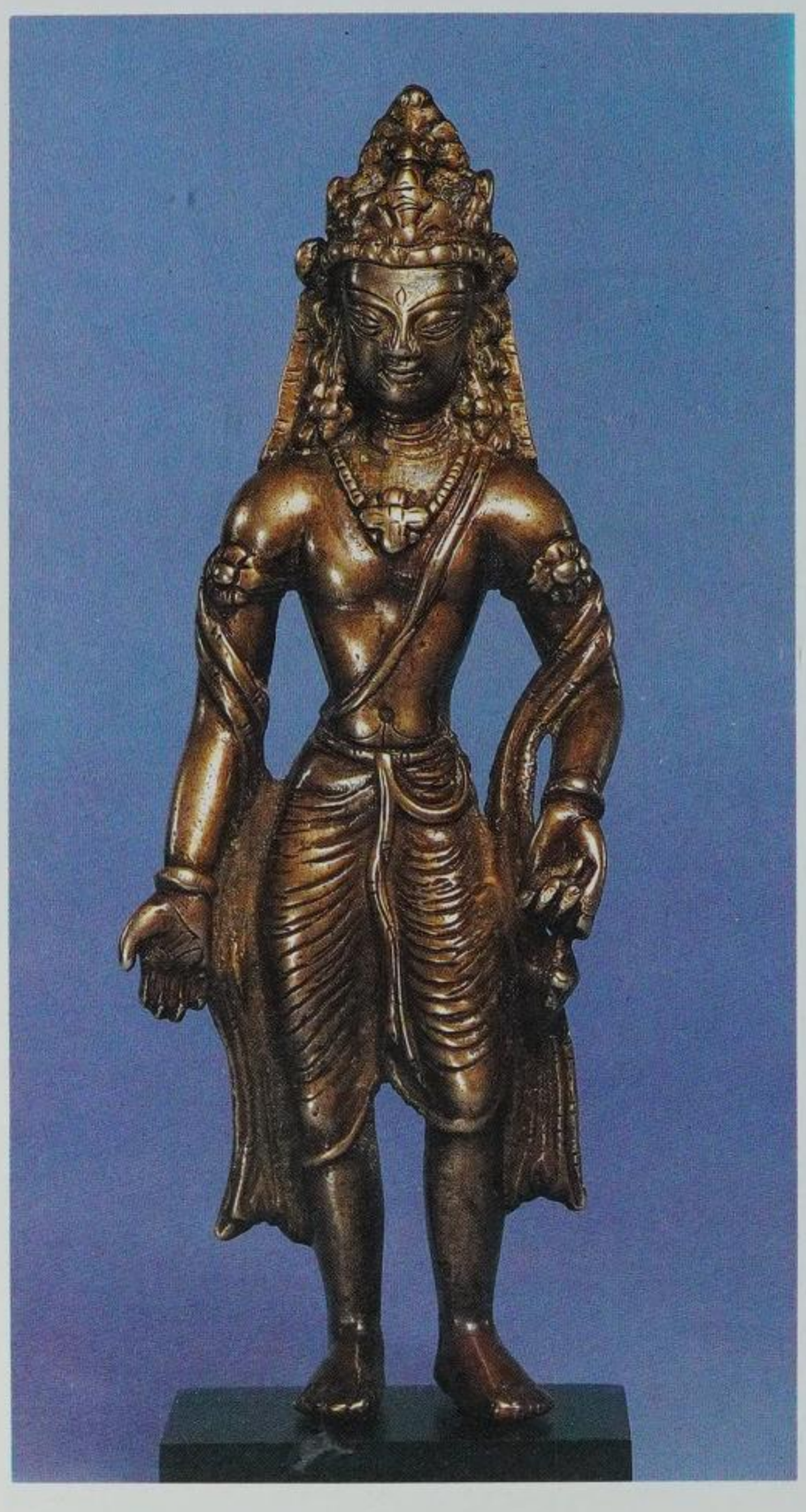
4. Buddha Sakyamuni; *c.* AD 1000; brass; 98.1 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Purchase, John L. Severance Fund.

5. Four-faced Vishnu; *c.* AD 850; brass with silver and copper inlay; 46.4 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Museum Associates Purchase.

6. Ganesha; seventh century; copper alloy; 8.1 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Indian Art Special Purpose Fund.

7. A Buddha; late seventh century; brass; Private Collection.

8. Buddhist deity Hayagriva; *c.* AD 800; copper alloy; 90.5 cm. Private Collection. (*opposite page*).



9. Bodhisattva Maitreya; eighth century; brass; approx. 10 cm. Private Collection.

11. Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara; *c.* AD 800; brass; 15.5 cm. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

10. Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, Gandhara; second-third century; schist; 24 cm. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

queen. The monk behind the queen may well be her preceptor. Whether or not one accepts the suggested identification, understandably it is one of the most sumptuous sculptures to have survived from the Karkota period and supports Kalhana's ecstatic description of gold and silver images that were subsequently melted down by unworthy and profligate rulers.

Even more so than the elegant Buddha with his well-defined robes, the richly inlaid cushion and the highly elaborate pedestal make this a *tour de force* of Kashmiri casting. Only in Kashmiri bronzes does one encounter such exuberant stylization of rock formations. In fact, as is clear from the few bronzes illustrated here, Kashmiri sculptors were particularly imaginative in making their pedestals and thrones. Even when they employed the more traditional lotus base, they variegated the design of the lotus in a very distinctive manner. Similarly, although the basic formula of their rock formations may have been borrowed from Gupta art of Central India and the Deccan rather than from neighbouring Gandhara, the Kashmiri sculptors delighted in creating shapes and forms that clearly reveal individual whimsy. Apart from donor figures and bodhisattvas, this particular rock formation is inhabited by a lively couple in a cave and birds and animals both in the front and the back. The lions seem particularly animated as one scratches his head and another, rather irreverently for an image of a Buddha, licks his genitalia.

The only firmly datable bronze of Karkota Kashmir is the Vishnu in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. As mentioned earlier, it was dedicated probably around AD 850, a few years before the Karkota rule came to an end with the installation of Avantivarman (r. AD 855-883), the first king of the Utpala dynasty. It represents an image type that was especially popular in Kashmir and the neighbouring regions. This form of Vishnu with four faces, and known as Chaturmurti or Vaikuntha, was the tutelary deity of both the Karkotas and the Utpalas. Apart from the four heads, the god is accompanied by his two personified attributes, Gadanari and Chakrapurusha, and the earth goddess Prithvi is depicted between his feet. This particular composition is typical of Kashmiri Vishnu images even where he is portrayed only with one head. Especially noteworthy is the rich copper inlay of the garments that stand out against the highly polished brass. *Fig. 5*

Another metal sculpture representing a *mukha-linga* can also be attributed to *c.* AD 850 on stylistic grounds. Siva's figure is closely comparable to the Los Angeles Vishnu and both may well have been made in the same workshop. Here too one notes a mode of representation that appears to have been characteristic of Kashmiri *mukha-lingas*. Instead of showing only the head, the figure is more than a bust, complete with arms and attributes which are a rosary and a lemon. Crowned and adorned like Vishnu but with a serpent serving as his sacred cord, Siva seems to emerge from the base of the linga which incidentally is not rendered as a water container and is without a spout. *see Copper Alloy Fig. 10*

One of the most impressive bronzes of the Karkota period represents an unusual form of the tantric Buddhist deity known as Hayagriva or the One with the Horse's Head. Compared with the Vishnu and *mukha-linga*, it must be given a slightly earlier date. His right hand very likely once held a sword and the left exhibits the gesture of admonition. The horse's head crowns his beautifully cascading locks. He is attired in a short dhoti of printed material which is partially covered with an animal skin. The form of the animal is so abstract and whimsical as to be scarcely recognizable. His ornaments consist entirely of snakes and thus his iconography is more akin to that of Bhairava rather than to his Hindu namesake who is an emanation of Vishnu. Despite his militant posture and gestures and the profusion of snakes, his expression is not ferocious and the face is, in fact, quite individualistic. *Fig. 8*

Earlier still is a small bronze representing the Bodhisattva Maitreya. An especially attractive and graceful figure, he stands elegantly in an unaffected posture. The body is modelled naturalistically with the various muscles emphasized, unlike the more abstract modelling of the Hayagriva or the Norton Simon Buddha. Kashmiri sculptors appear to have vacillated between naturalistic and abstract delineations of the human body throughout their history. Some sculptors preferred to model their figures with realistic details as did their forebears in Gandhara, while others adopted the smooth, undifferentiated plasticity of the Gupta tradition. The concern for greater naturalism witnessed in this figure is also expressed by the garment with its articulate and prominent folds. *Fig. 9*

A type of bodhisattva figure, whose origins go back to the art of Gandhara though one or two examples from Kushan Mathura are known, and which was especially popular in Karkota Kashmir, is represented by a fine example in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.[11] Curiously, the type is only known from metal examples, all of which are small. From Gandhara the type also spread to East Asia, where it became the most popular representation of the Bodhisattva Maitreya, and sometimes of the youthful and pensive Sakyamuni. In Kashmir, however, the figure almost always depicts the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, presumably contemplating the *Fig. 10* *Fig. 11*

means to save all sentient beings. Usually also in Kashmiri depictions, as in this instance, the bodhisattva is an ascetic figure of disarming simplicity seated on a wicker seat, while in Gandhara he is a more urbane and princely figure. The animal skin across the Kashmiri figure has the same abstract and whimsical qualities as that seen in the Hayagriva. The cascading curls of his hair, however, are of a different design, more self-consciously decorative. It should be noted that the face with its pugnacious nose and prominently swollen cheeks reflects a Mongolian ethnic influence, which would not be unusual for a bronze made during the reign of Lalitaditya who had close contacts with Central Asians and the Chinese.

Utpala (AD 855-1003) and Lohara (AD 1003-1165) Periods

Despite the destruction of Buddhist monasteries by such kings as Kshemagupta (r. AD 950-958), the husband of Queen Didda, and the iconoclast Harsha (r. AD 1089-1101) of the Lohara dynasty, a greater number of surviving Kashmiri bronzes belongs to the Utpala and the Lohara periods than to the earlier Karkota period. Partly this is due to the closer ties at this time between Western Tibetan kingdoms such as Guge and Kashmir. Not only was there a lively exchange of monks and scholars between the two regions, but during the attacks on the monasteries in Kashmir, both Kashmiri monks and their icons must have been welcomed with open arms in Tibet. Naturally the surviving bronzes are largely Buddhist, which is true of other regions of northern India as well. Hindu bronzes were meant primarily for domestic use, where due to constant worship they would often be worn out and hence discarded. Moreover, large numbers must have been destroyed when after the fourteenth century Hindus in Kashmir converted to Islam *en masse*. Buddhist bronzes on the other hand were frequently given to monasteries, which is why in other places in India hoards of Buddhist bronzes have been discovered. Extensive archaeological excavation at Buddhist sites may yield similar hoards in Kashmir as well.

Virtually all surviving large metal sculptures are from the later periods. Among them the Cleveland Buddha and the Devsar frame are well known. The only datable Kashmiri bronze of the period is that dedicated during the reign of Queen Didda. No other Kashmiri bronze can be associated with the name of a ruling monarch. Apart from their size, the later bronzes of Kashmir are also distinguished by a wide iconographic variety. That is to be expected, since this is the period when both Hinduism and Buddhism were strongly influenced by tantric ideas involving highly imaginative forms with multiple limbs. Although other regions of the subcontinent, such as Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, were also important centres of tantrism, a much greater and more dramatic variety of representations of tantric deities, especially Buddhist, has survived from Kashmir. Compared with their colleagues elsewhere, the Kashmiri sculptors reveal far greater idiosyncrasy and ingenuity in giving shape to the visions of the monks and mystics.

While brass continued to be the principal medium for metal sculptures, the later sculptors seem to have been less interested in inlaying. Eyes continued to be inlaid with silver but the rich use of copper inlay is rarely found in later Kashmiri metal sculptures. On the whole the surviving bronzes are seldom as sumptuous either in compositional complexity or in surface ornamentation as is encountered in earlier Karkota period bronzes. The exuberance and inventiveness manifest in the socles of Karkota period bronzes are now eschewed and simpler bases are used with Buddhas and deities placed directly on lotuses. The lotus itself is rendered in many different forms and shapes, some continuing the "artichoke" shapes of Karkota period bronzes, others combining the extended petal shapes with what had been characterized as "double staminoid" forms, still others preferring simpler designs. Elliptical narrow aureoles and circular haloes fringed with flame motifs become common features with the flames being more summarily rendered by the eleventh century. There seems also a tendency to elongate the figures and faces which are not as full and fleshy as in the Karkota period sculptures. This proclivity for a more linear definition of the contour results also in attenuated figures where the muscles of the body are not as well articulated as in the sculptures of the earlier period. Details are sometimes more sketchily rendered, and even in such impressive examples as the magnificent Cleveland Buddha and the even more dramatic Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara, the backs are often left unfinished. This is also a characteristic of several of the large bodhisattva images that may have been modelled and cast in Western Tibetan workshops, though in a strongly Kashmiri style (see Kashmir and the Tibetan Connection).

Figs. 12, 13 Two small bronzes, one representing a divine censer-bearer and another an infant Buddha, very likely belong to the second half of the ninth century even though stylistically they are rather distinct. While discussing Indian art one must always bear in mind that despite reflecting certain

common characteristics of a given period, often various schools or workshops flourished in the same region, which produced sculptures in very distinct styles. Moreover, all too often Indian art historians do not take into account the possibility of highly talented individual artists who might deliberately depart from the stylistic norms of their own time. The censer-bearer is a delightful bronze which, though not inlaid, still echoes the Karkota sculptors' concern for exquisite ornamentation, articulate details, naturalistic grace and lively composition. Stylistically, it is comparable with the Avantiswami temple sculptures of the second half of the ninth century.

The small bronze of the infant Buddha is an important sculpture not only for the history of Kashmiri Buddhism but for Indian Buddhism as well. The first such independent image of an infant Buddha rendered in an Indian style, it is convincing evidence that the cult of the infant Buddha, still surviving in Korea and Japan (and perhaps in China, where it was once popular), may well have been familiar on the subcontinent. As in East Asia, such images may have been bathed in Indian Buddhist temples on the Buddha's birthday, for which there is some literary evidence surviving from Kashmir.[12] While the short dhoti of the well-formed, robust boy is inlaid with copper as in Karkota period figures, the designs of the lotus and the base, as well as the palaeography of the inscription which only provides the name of the donor, indicate a date probably towards the end of the ninth century. *Fig. 13*

Three of the most outstanding examples of Kashmiri metal sculpture of the Utpala period are the Avatar frame from Devsar and the Cleveland Buddha and bodhisattva. The metal frame, described as a "masterpiece" by Hermann Goetz, who first published it in a long article, does indeed demonstrate the extraordinary skill of the Kashmiris in this medium. This is unquestionably the most elaborate piece of casting to have survived in India. Iconographically too the frame is intriguing, and Goetz has argued that the principal image may have been a Buddha as an avatar of Vishnu. While this is not unlikely, one cannot be certain. Nor can one accept his suggestion that the frame along with the image was dedicated by King Samkaravarman (r. AD 886-902) and *Figs. 14, 15*

12. Censer-bearer; ninth century; copper alloy; 19.2 cm. Private Collection.

13. Infant Buddha; ninth century; brass; 14.6 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum Acquisition Fund.

14. Avatar frame, Devsar; tenth century; copper alloy; 186 cm. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

15. Detail of figure 14.

16. Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara; tenth century; brass; 39.4 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Purchase, Andrew R. and Martha Holden Jennings Fund.

17. Reverse of figure 16.

18. Detail of figure 16.

19. Buddhist goddess Kurukulla; eleventh century; brass; 26 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Kurit. (*opposite page*).

20. Buddhist goddess Tara; eleventh century; brass; 26.8 cm. R. H. Ellsworth Ltd., New York. (*above*).

21. Buddhist god Vighnantaka; eleventh century; leaded brass; 10.2 cm. R. H. Ellsworth Ltd., New York.

his queen Sugandha. This too is pure conjecture, though the image could have been a royal dedication. Until a more detailed study can be undertaken, the frame may be considered to be a work of the tenth century.

Fig. 4 Closely related in style and date are the Cleveland Buddha and Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara. Universally admired as one of the largest and most elegant of all metal Buddha images, there is *Fig. 16* some disagreement among scholars about the former's date. As mentioned earlier, according to the Tibetan inscription on the base the image once belonged to a Nagaraja who is generally identified with a pious prince of Western Tibet. His exact dates are unknown but he must have flourished around AD 1000. Some think the Buddha was made earlier in Kashmir, even during the reign of Lalitaditya. A stylistic comparison with Lalitaditya period sculptures, however, makes this highly unlikely. Whatever its exact date, it is an aesthetically pleasing figure that has a strong spiritual presence.

Figs. 16, 17, 18 The much smaller statue of the Eleven-headed Lokeshvara is among the most dramatic representations of a tantric deity known. While the slim, elegant proportions of the body and its subtle modelling relate it to the Buddha, the expressiveness and the extraordinary power of the seven angry heads clearly demonstrate that the figure was modelled by a master sculptor. Apart from the fact that very few representations of this deity are known in Indian Buddhist art, in none are the angry faces portrayed with such ferocity. The basic formula is already encountered in the art of the Karkota period but the depictions here have an elemental power missing in the models. As one looks at these menacing faces, their fury becomes palpable and one can almost hear their thundering roars.

The continued vitality of the Kashmiri sculptural tradition as well as the rich iconographic *Figs. 19, 20, 21* variety may best be illustrated by three small bronzes of the eleventh-twelfth centuries. Two of them represent goddesses and one an angry Buddhist deity called Vighnantaka. Stylistically the figure of Kurukulla, the Buddhist goddess of love, is akin to the females in the Queen Didda bronze. Though damaged, the bronze is attractive for its restrained decoration and the lively sense of movement expressed by the arms, the swirling scarves, the aureole and nimbus as well as for the deeply-carved, lyrical vine motif along the rectangular base. Both this figure and the representation of the goddess Tara provide us with some idea of the Kashmiri sculptor's treatment of the female form. Tightly placed swelling breasts, a remarkably pinched waist and wide flaring hips that give the female torso a pronounced hour-glass shape are typically Kashmiri. Rarely is the torso bare; it is clad in a distinctive blouse which also is seen only in this region. It should be noted though that the jacket-like close-fitting blouse is not allowed to obscure the shapeliness or volume of the bosom.

Fig. 21 Vighnantaka is a Buddhist deity who is worshipped to remove all obstacles or *vighna*. In this instance the Buddhists show him triumphing over a prostrate Ganesha, the divine remover of obstacles among the Hindus. Once again an unknown Kashmiri sculptor has given us a spirited and dynamic representation where both figures strike naturalistic poses and interact. The two figures are well modelled but the details are not as refined as in earlier bronzes. Nevertheless, this charming and animated bronze clearly demonstrates the imaginative flair and creative vitality of the Kashmiri sculptors well into the eleventh-twelfth century. Thereafter, however, the figural tradition of metal sculpture seems to have disappeared from the Kashmir valley.

NOTES

1. R. S. Pandit, trans., *Rajatarangini: The Saga of the Kings of Kasmir* (New Delhi, 1968), p. 136.
2. J. P. Vogel, "Inscribed Brass Statuette from Fatehpur (Kangra)," *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report,* (1904-1905, [1906]), pp. 107-188; A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (New York, 1965), pl. XLIII, p. 163.
3. H. Goetz, *Studies in the History and Art of Kashmir and the Indian Himalayas* (Wiesbaden, 1969).
4. D. Barrett, "Bronzes from Northwest India and Western Pakistan," *Lalit Kala,* no. 11 (1962), pp. 35-88.
5. P. Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir* (Graz, 1975).
6. C. L. Reedy, "Technical Analysis of Medieval Himalayan Copper Alloy Statues for Provenance Determination" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1986).
7. Forthcoming in Douglas Barrett Felicitation Volume.
8. See P. Pal, "Munificent Monarch and a Superior Sculptor" in Vidya Dehejia, ed., *Royal Patrons and Great Temple Art* (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1988).
9. Coomaraswamy, op. cit., pl. XLV, p. 168.
10. See P. G. Paul, "Early Sculpture of Kashmir" (Ph.D. diss., University of Leiden, 1986).
11. The figure has recently been attributed to Panjab and the date suggested is sixth-eighth century. While the date may well be late eighth century, the Panjabi attribution is questionable. See J. C. Harle and A. Topsfield, *Indian Art in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 25-26.
12. P. Pal, "The Cult of the Infant Buddha," *Orientations,* October, 1988, pp. 60-65.

□

Copper Alloy Casting and Decorating Technology

Chandra L. Reedy

The high quality and beauty of copper alloy statues attributed to Kashmir are widely appreciated by art historians and collectors of Asian art. The technical proficiency of Kashmiri artists at each step of the casting and decorating process contributed to their aesthetic success. There is a noticeable but limited variation in the composition of copper alloys, details of casting procedures, and level of elaboration of surface decoration. However, within the range of observed variation, the artists of Kashmir were remarkably consistent in their use of a sophisticated technology that resulted in high quality, technically successful works of art.

Alloying Practices

Unalloyed copper presented two casting difficulties. First, its high melting temperature (1083°C) makes it hard to liquefy and quick to solidify during the pouring process, which must therefore be done rapidly. Second, molten copper decomposes water vapour and absorbs the hydrogen released, which in turn forms bubbles as the copper cools and solidifies. Alloying copper with tin, zinc, lead, or arsenic can eliminate these problems.[1] The artists of Kashmir were apparently aware of these casting difficulties, and thus used only alloys.

If a metal element is present in the copper in an amount greater than 2%, we can assume it was most likely a deliberate alloy addition rather than an accidental contamination. Metal analyses show that several different copper alloy types were popular in Kashmir. By far the most common alloy used was leaded brass (copper with at least 2% zinc, plus at least 2% lead), with brass (only zinc added to the copper) the second most common material. Bronze (at least 2% tin added to copper) was very rarely used, but tin was frequently combined with zinc to produce a copper-zinc-tin alloy (or copper-tin-zinc alloy depending upon which element is present in the greater amount). Both of these combination alloys may occur either with or without added lead.

Sixty statues attributed to Kashmir were recently analyzed at the Conservation Center of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Of these, 53% are made of leaded brass, 21% are brass, and 25% are composed of one of the combination alloys containing both tin and zinc. Only one object is made of pure bronze.[2] Except for this statue, zinc ranges from 2% to 35%. Tin additions, when present, range between 2.5% and 18.5%. No objects are known to have been produced in Kashmir with unalloyed copper, and arsenic was only once added as an alloying element.

Sources of Metals

Copper: Copper mineralization in the Kashmir valley is more abundant than in neighbouring regions, although it is still not extremely rich. Resources may possibly have been sufficient for local use, but copper almost certainly was never an export item. Ore deposits are located
Fig. 1 in the districts of Anantnag, Baramula, and Srinagar,[3] but early workings have only been discovered at sites in the first two districts.

In Anantnag district the major mining area is found on a hill spur overlooking Shomal village (also called Shumahal) near the resort town of Pahalgam. An early nineteenth-century traveller, G. T. Vigne, mentioned these mines, but said that work there had long-since ceased at the time of his visit.[4]

The most abundant ore at Shomal is the green copper oxide, malachite, with a few rare
Fig. 2 specks of the golden sulphide ore, chalcopyrite. There are more than ten mining shafts still present in the hillside, each generally measuring about two metres high and wide, and at least ten metres deep. These shafts descend very steeply at an angle of about 45°, following the ore veins down into the earth.

A second mining area in Anantnag district is also located just outside of Pahalgam, on the slopes of the Mamal mountain. The mineralization (malachite and chalcopyrite) is found in a reddish shale on the south-facing slope of the Mamal. The area has the "bomb crater" look often seen where surface working of copper deposits has been carried out, with a series of open pits dug into the hillside. Most of these pits are about ten metres across and five metres deep, with traces of ore remaining inside. These workings are typical of the most simple type of early mining technology found elsewhere in India.

The most sophisticated of the early mining sites reported for Kashmir is found in Baramula district a hundred kilometres north-west of Srinagar, near the village of Lashteal. The major mining shaft here is two metres high, tall enough for a person carrying a torch above his head to walk. Carbon trails all along the ceiling remain from such torches. The shaft descends steeply for about three metres and then levels off into a long tunnel which opens into a large room of about ten cubic metres. Other side tunnels and rooms are present.

An ore chute descending from the large room and emerging lower on the hillside allowed the miners to remove pieces of ore and rock at a flatter and more accessible place than the main tunnel entrance. The chute would also have improved ventilation in the main tunnel. Again, the ore minerals exploited appear to have been primarily malachite and chalcopyrite.

Zinc: Although very small quantities of zinc ore have been reported at several North Indian localities, there is no direct evidence that these have been exploited in the past. However, because the use of zinc as an alloying element in the production of Kashmiri statues was so frequent, it is likely that some local sources were used. It is possible that zinc was extracted from ores found in association with local lead deposits.

The largest zinc deposits relatively close to Kashmir, and a potential source for importation, are located in Rajasthan in the Zawar area. Extensive remains still exist there of early zinc mining and smelting activities. These remains have been dated by archaeologists, and range from the second century BC up to the seventeenth century AD.[5]

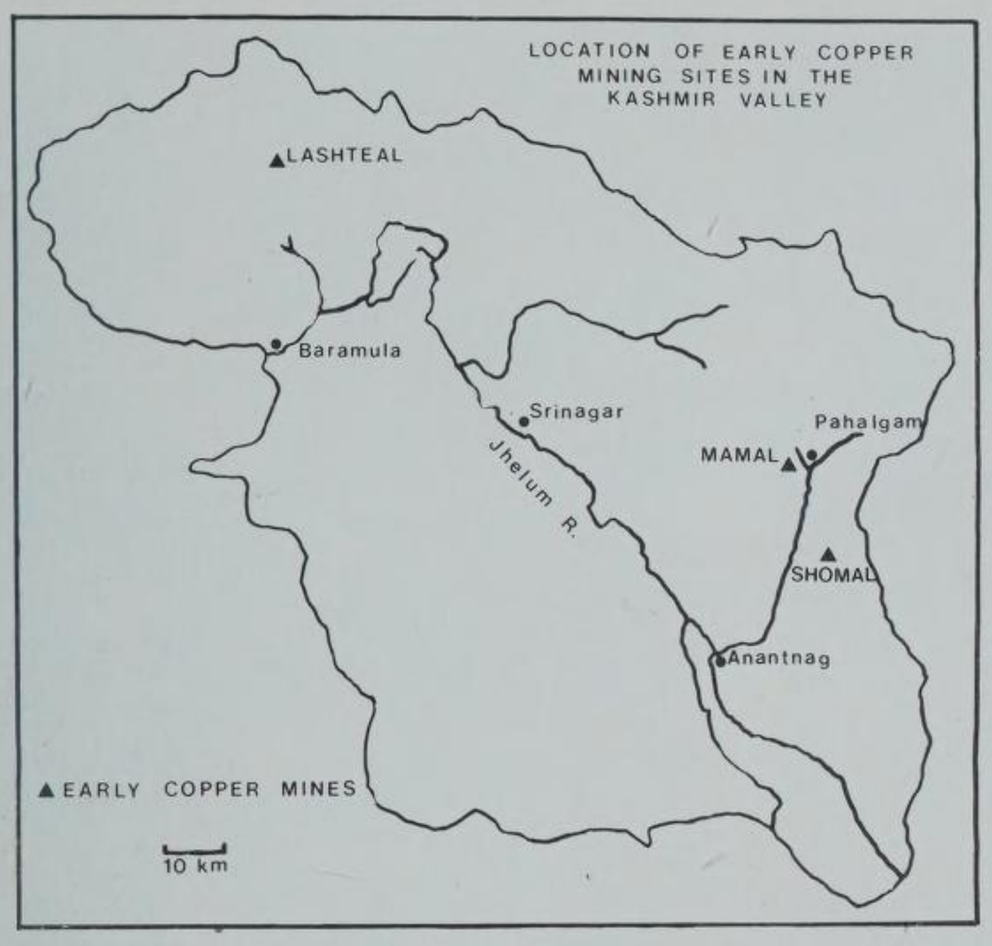
Tin: The most likely source of tin for the artists of Kashmir would have been deposits available in Afghanistan.[6] There are also smaller deposits of tin oxide ore that may have been exploited during the medieval period in Iran[7] and in Bihar.[8]

Lead: Sizeable deposits of lead ores with remains of ancient workings exist in Jammu and Kashmir. This mineral was also abundantly available for import if necessary from neighbouring Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well as from Uttar Pradesh and from as far away as North-east India or Western India.[9]

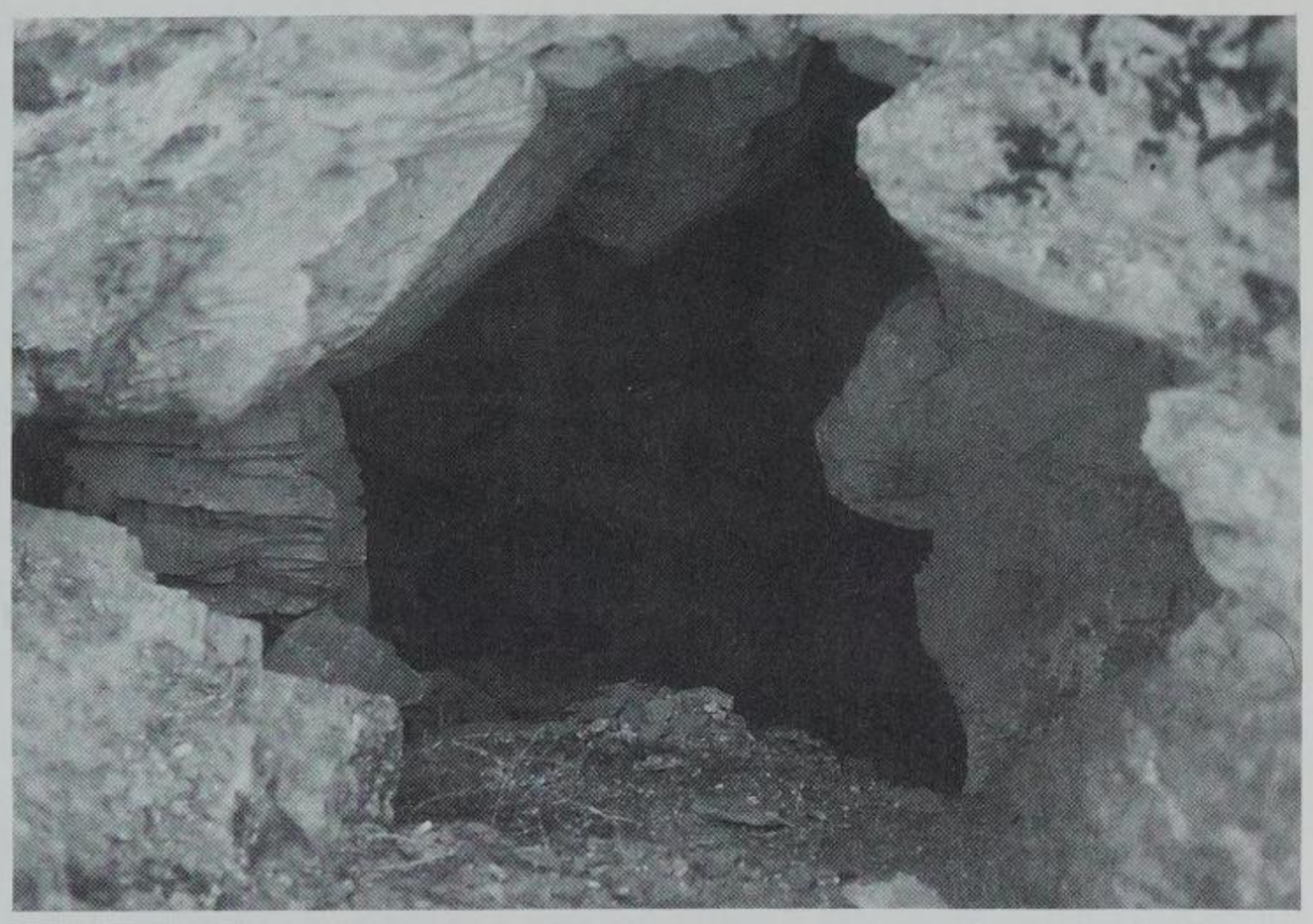
Casting Technology

Lost Wax Casting: Copper alloy statues were produced in Kashmir by the lost wax casting method. The first step in this process is to make a model in wax of the object to be reproduced in metal. The wax model may be either solid or hollow. If hollow, the wax is built up around a clay core. Iron rods or wires (armatures) are often used to support the casting core. Iron nails (chaplets) are used to keep the core in position in the mould after the wax is later melted out.

A system of runners (passages for pouring metal into the mould) and risers (passages for the



1. Map of copper deposits with evidence of possible medieval period mining activity.



2. Entrance to an early copper mine at Shomal in Anantnag district.

release of gases) are attached to the wax model. The model is then covered with various layers of clay (the investment) which reproduces an exact imprint of the wax image on its inner surface.

The whole assembly is heated to melt the wax, which is poured out of the investment, leaving a cavity for the molten metal. The molten metal is poured in through the runners, displacing air which escapes through the risers. If air or other gases become trapped inside, bubbles and casting flaws result. The poured metal will take the shape of the imprint which has been originally formed in the clay mould by tne wax model.

After the metal has solidified, the investment is broken away and the runners and risers are cut off. Surface irregularities are filed down, casting flaws may be patched over, and the piece is polished and finished.

Decorative features may be carved into the wax model prior to casting. These pre-cast decorations are usually further refined by chiselling, chasing and engraving after casting has been completed. Inlays may be set into pre-cast cavities, and paint or gilding applied at this point in the production process.

Kashmiri Techniques: Statues from Kashmir were almost always cast in one piece. Occasionally a base was cast separately and attached to the figure with tangs, but only very rarely was the figure itself cast in more than one piece. Mandorlas on smaller statues were cast integrally with the main figure. However, the presence of some large separately-cast mandorlas that have become detached from the figures they once framed indicates that for large pieces an elaborate, separately-cast mandorla was possible.[10]

Fig. 3 The majority of statues were hollow cast around a clay core. The smallest objects tended to be cast in solid metal. However, even very small pieces were sometimes hollow cast.

To construct the clay core found inside hollow castings the artists of Kashmir used a sandy rather than a fine clay, probably collected from local stream-beds. This sandy clay is composed of 10%-30% quartz grains ranging in size from less than 0.1 mm. up to 0.4 mm. These grains
Fig. 4 usually have subangular to subrounded edges, consistent with sediments that have been transported by water in a river environment. Many other minerals are present in small amounts in the sediments as accessary minerals. These include various feldspars, micas, pyroxenes, amphiboles, carbonates, hematite, zircon, apatite, and metamorphic lithic fragments. Although none of these minerals was added as a temper, the artists did add organic material to temper
Fig. 5 the clay. The high casting temperatures have carbonized that organic material, leaving small chunks of carbon. The structure of the former organic material is often destroyed, so it is not possible to identify exactly what the material was. These carbon chunks comprise from 10% up to 30% of the casting core.

Hollow statues cast around a clay core usually have one armature, which is made of iron
Fig. 7 and is placed in the centre of the figure. X-ray radiography reveals this typical iron armature.
Fig. 6 One-third of all statues attributed to Kashmir have a small round hole on the back of the head. This hole may be related to the casting process, possibly indicating where a rod was used to hold the mould in place during casting and was subsequently removed.

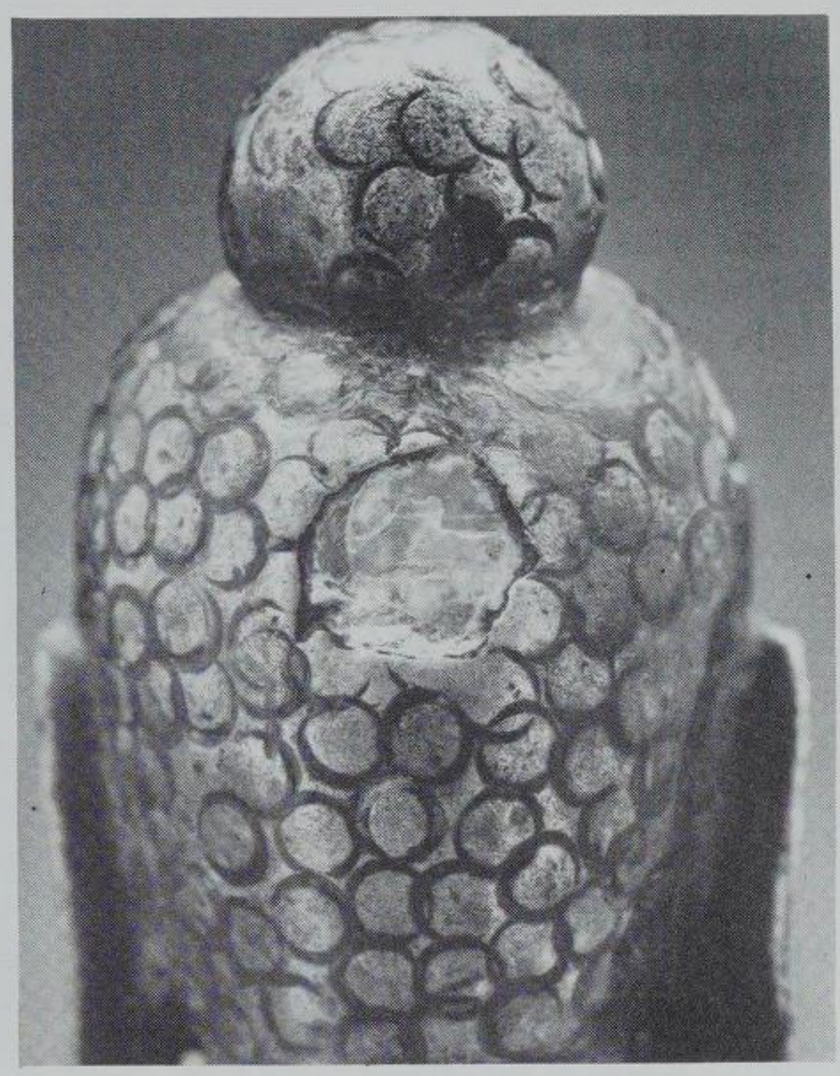
Kashmiri artists generally preferred to use few iron chaplets in their castings. The average object has only one, and many pieces have none visible at all. However, there is a small subgroup of statues for which the artists chose to use many. Most of those chaplets were removed after casting was completed, and the holes that remained were patched with very small copper plugs. In a few examples the artist carefully placed the chaplet so that it would form part of an ornament, thus making it very unobtrusive. Chaplets were always square or rectangular in shape, and were generally no more than 1.5 mm. wide.

We know that some Kashmiri statues were cast head downward through a runner and riser located on the bottom of the piece. That procedure causes any casting defects to appear on the bottom of the base. However, this method does not work well for very large objects. In order to have casting flaws as unobtrusive as possible, the larger statues were cast face down at a slight angle so that the head was lower than the feet. The metal was poured in through a runner and riser located on the back, with the result that casting defects occurred on the back of the piece rather than on the front.

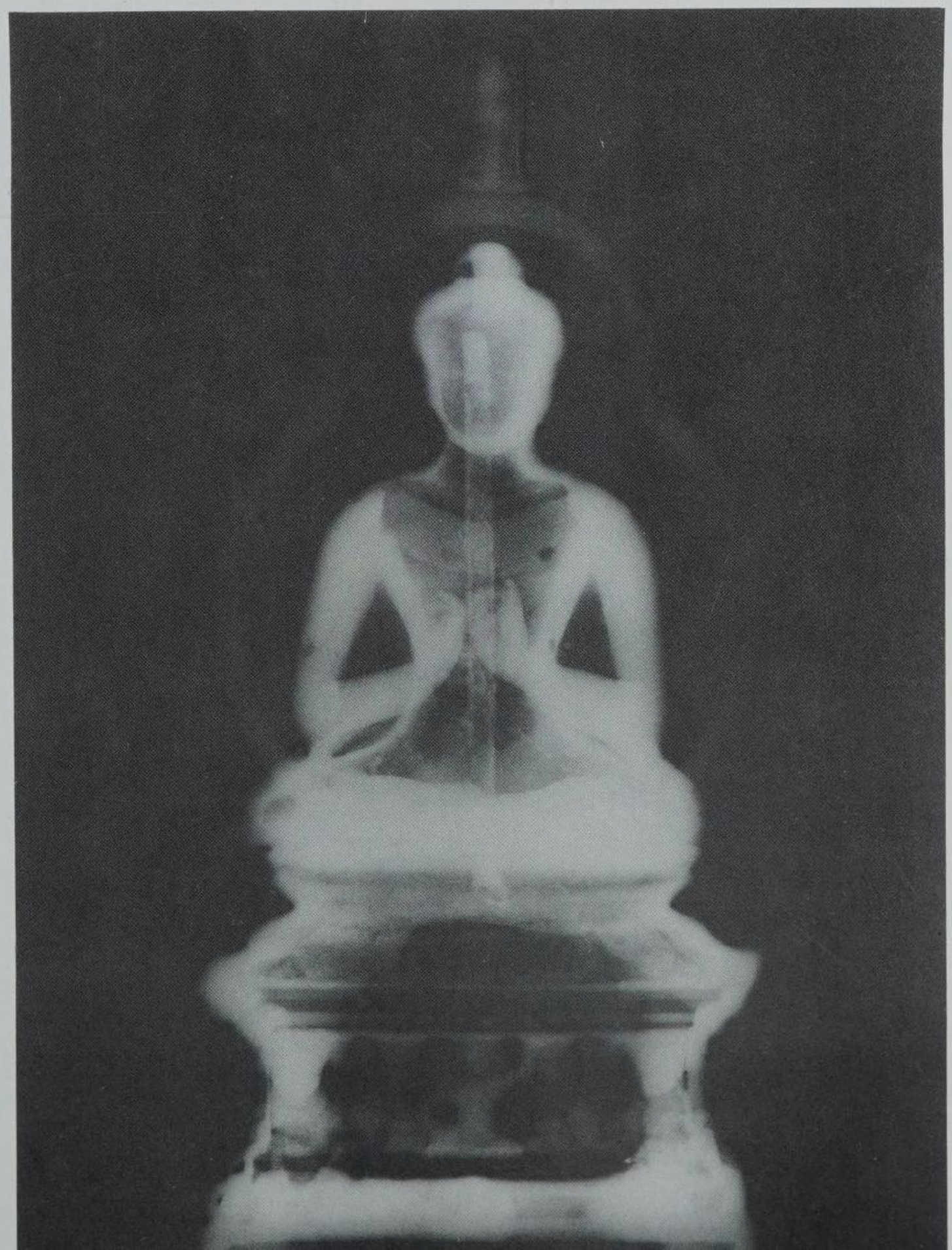
Most objects had at least a few casting flaws. These were often repaired very carefully, and more than half of all Kashmiri pieces exhibit such repairs. The usual procedure was to chisel a square or rectangular outline around the flaw, with a repair patch made to fit it precisely. The chiselled lines were undercut so that they were wider at the base than at the top. As a result, when the repair patch was hammered in, it could spread out underneath the edge of the line, and would be held fast in place without any need for adhesives. This
Fig. 8 method of outlining and undercutting the base of the lines can be observed on objects where

4. Sample of clay core material magnified 200 times, with quartz and feldspar grains showing typical subrounded edges common in sediments that have been transported along a river-bed (in crossed polarized light).

5. Clay core material in plane polarized light (magnified 200 times), with black chunks of carbon originating from organic tempers visible.



6. Hole on back of head, a feature found on many statues from Kashmir, possibly resulting from casting techniques (wax in-filling is relatively recent). Sakyamuni Buddha (detail); eighth-ninth century; copper-zinc-tin alloy; 9.5 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art.



7. X-ray radiograph showing a typical central iron armature extending from the top of the base to the upper head. Dark areas in the centre of the body and head indicate hollow portions filled with clay; white areas indicate solid metal. Sakyamuni Buddha; tenth century; leaded brass; 24.3 cm. R. H. Ellsworth Ltd., New York.

the repair patches have either fallen out or where, for some unknown reason, the repair process was started but never finished.

Fig. 9 The artists were often careful to select repair patches that closely matched the original metal, so that they would not stand out any more than necessary. This attention to detail in repair work, even when the casting flaws were on the back of a piece, is characteristic of the workshops of Kashmir. In some cases the amount of time spent on repairing even slight casting flaws must have been considerable. For example, some larger Kashmiri objects contain as many as fifty separate repairs.

Sometimes, if a very large repair was needed, a small runner and riser were attached *Fig. 10* and the repair was cast on rather than hammered on. An example is seen on an *eka-mukha-linga* which is 34.3 cm. in height. The artist experienced many difficulties with this casting, and a total of forty-four repairs were required. Most of these were done with repair patches as described above. However, a very large repair area including most of the back of the piece *Figs. 11,* was cast on. This cast-on repair is clearly visible from the underside of the piece, and on an *12* X-ray radiograph.

The effort expended on repairing casting flaws on the backs of objects is even more remarkable when we consider that many pieces were apparently never meant to be viewed from behind. *Fig. 13* One-third of all Kashmiri statues have on the back a rectangular protuberance with a hole in its centre. This feature was most likely used to attach a mandorla or backpiece that has since disappeared, which means that much of the back of the object would have been obscured from view.

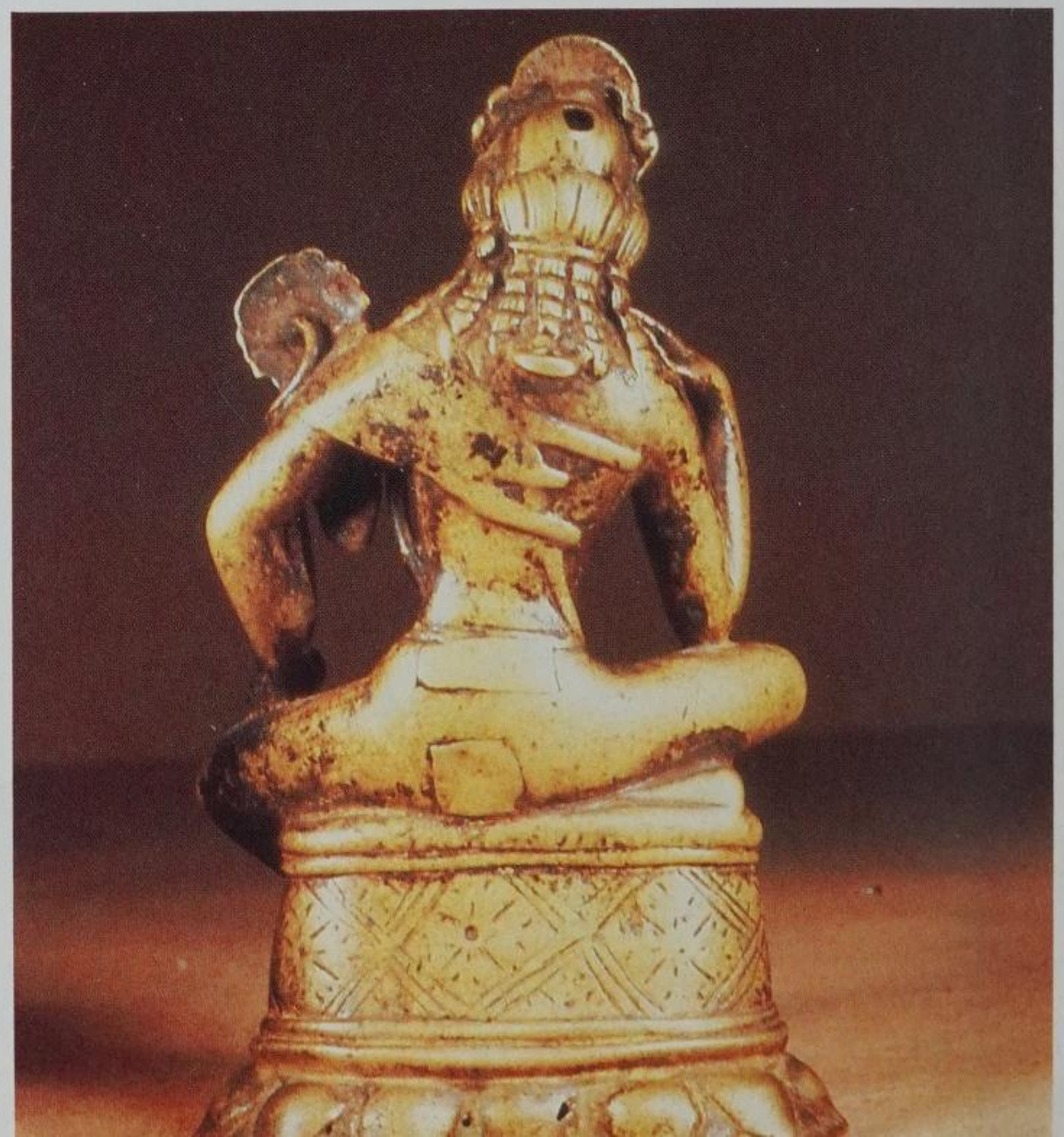
Decorative Work

There is a wide range in the quality and extent of decorative detail found on statues produced in Kashmir. Some pieces are of particularly fine workmanship, indicating that much time was spent in carving details into the wax model and in finishing, chasing and inlaying the image. Other pieces are of much coarser work, with few or no inlays, and few details chased into garments, ornaments, or other surface areas. This variation in quality and extent of detail may indicate differences in craftsmanship among different workshops, but it most likely also reflects differing resources of the patrons supporting the art production.

Stone inlays are extremely rare in Kashmir, and glass inlays are unknown. However, the high quality of silver and copper inlay work is a remarkable feature of many of the statues. The same basic technique of undercutting used to repair casting flaws was also employed for the inlay process.

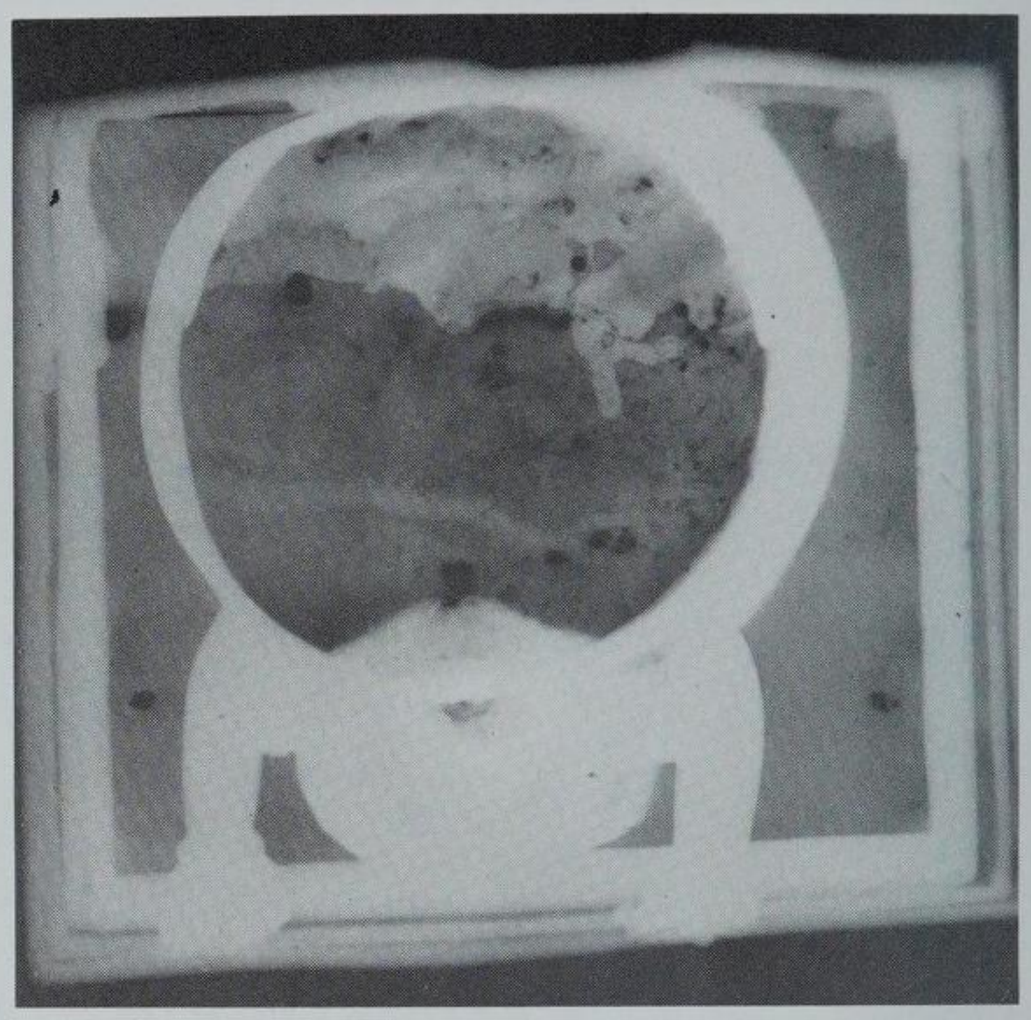
8. Outlined and undercut areas around casting flaws on the back of a statue. Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara (detail); tenth century; leaded brass; 39.4 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art.

9. Repair patches closely matching the original statue metal cover casting flaws on the back of an image. Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara; seventh-eighth century; copper-zinc-tin alloy; 20 cm. Private Collection, New York.



10. Large object with forty-four separate repairs over casting flaws, including both hammered-on patches and a cast-on repair. *Eka-mukha-linga;* eighth-ninth century; copper-tin-zinc alloy; 34.3 cm. R. H. Ellsworth Ltd., New York.

11. Underside of the *eka-mukha-linga* in figure 10 showing seam of a large cast-on repair which includes most of the back of the piece.



12. X-ray radiograph giving a top view of the *eka-mukha-linga* in figure 10, with the irregular outlines of the cast-on repair visible on the back of the piece. The repair is slightly whiter than the contiguous metal, indicating that it is slightly thicker.

13. Typical holder tang on back of piece. Bodhisattva Manjushri; ninth century; brass; 14.6 cm. R. H. Ellsworth Ltd., New York.

The majority of Kashmiri statues have silver inlays in the eyes. The artist first made an incised line outlining the eye, then chiselled out the area. Some of the chiselling had already been done in the wax, and thus needed only to be refined in the metal. A piece of silver cut just slightly larger than the eye was rounded and arched, probably by hammering it into a round depression. This already-moulded silver piece was then set inside the eye hole and hammered into place. Because the hole was undercut and the silver piece was pre-arched, when the silver was punched in the centre it spread out underneath the brass edge of the eye. As with the repair patches, since the lines were wider at the base than at the top, the inlay piece could not fall out, and thus no adhesives were required.

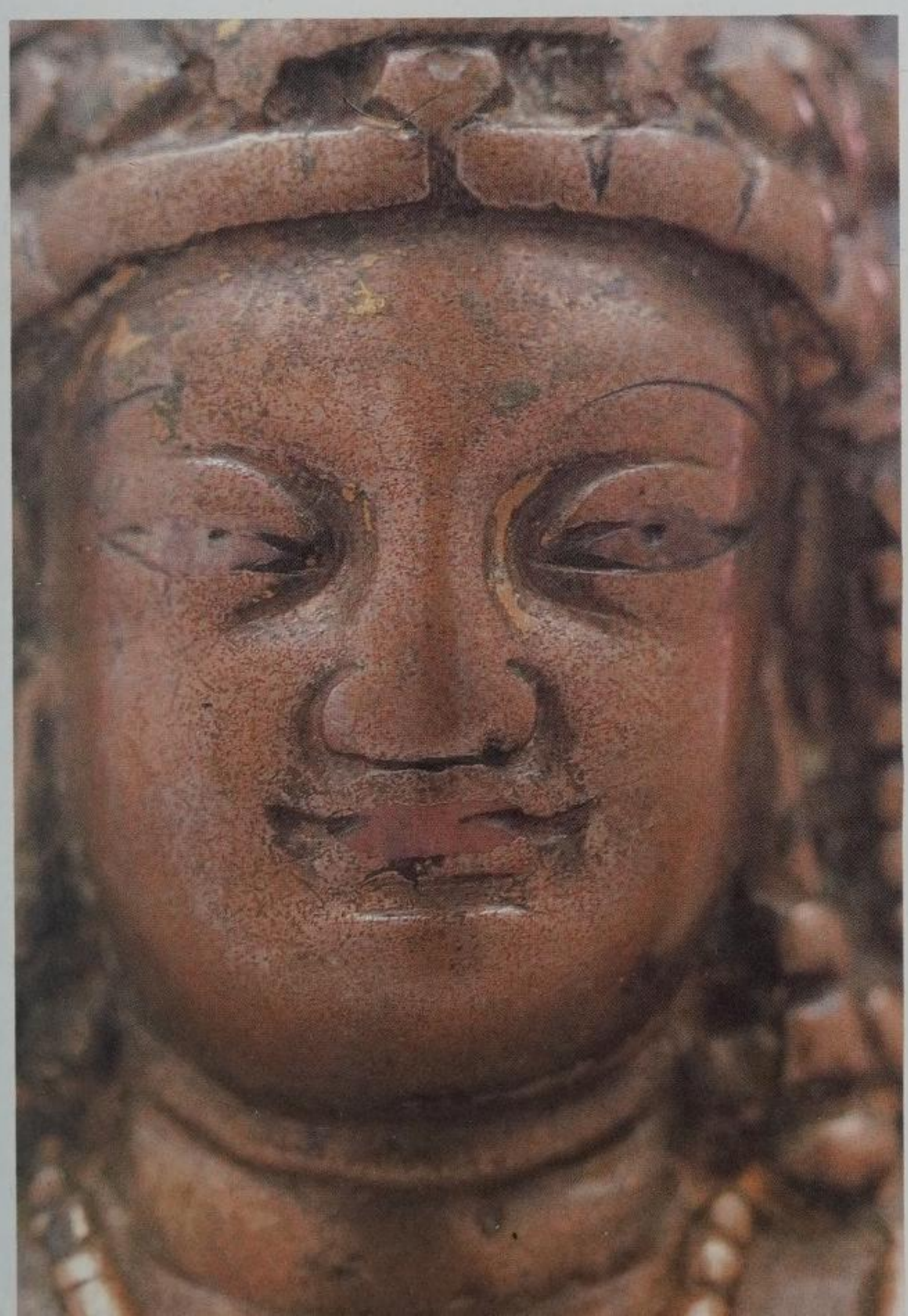
In addition to the silver inlays in the eyes, many pieces from Kashmir have copper inlay in the lips. A magnified image of these typical facial inlays illustrates that because they are made of softer, unalloyed metals, the inlays tend to become worn with age. A binocular microscope may be required to identify with certainty the presence of inlay work. This is especially true for the copper inlays, which develop a corroded layer over time that may very closely resemble the corrosion developing on the surrounding copper alloy surface of the statue. *Fig. 14*

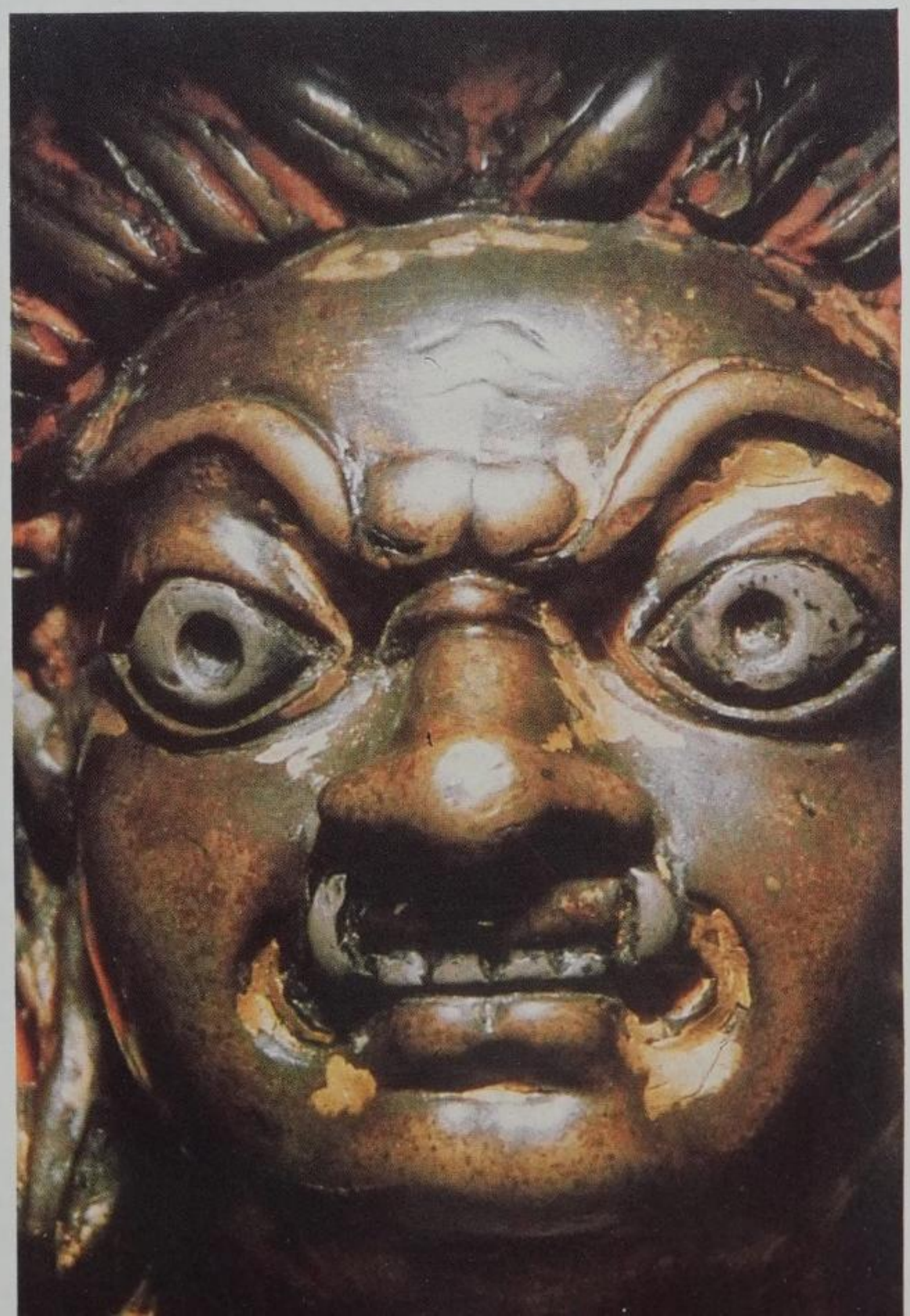
In some cases the lips were inlaid with silver instead of copper, and occasionally the eyes might be inlaid with copper rather than the usual silver. Many Buddhist statues also have silver or copper inlay in the *urna* (dot between the eyebrows). More elaborate silver inlay work can include decoration in garments and in ornaments such as necklaces, ear-rings and belt buckles. Elaborate copper inlay can include work in finger-nails or toe-nails, nipples, and ornaments. Highly elaborate inlay work is not restricted to the larger and more complex statues, but also appears in pieces only a few centimetres in height.

As a measure of variability in the level of decorative detail present in Kashmir, the number of simple versus elaborate objects were tabulated for the Kashmiri statues studied in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art Conservation Center.[11] Among sixty objects, 34% have no inlay work present at all, 22% have simple inlays (in the eyes and/or *urna* only), and 44% have elaborate inlay work (in lips, ornaments, garments, etc., in addition to eyes and/or *urna*). Buddhist objects were found to contain elaborate inlay work more than twice as often as Hindu objects, indicating that the Buddhist patrons may have been more affluent than their Hindu counterparts and were also fond of more sumptuous surfaces.

14. Typical inlaid facial features include silver in both eyes and copper in lips, with inlays becoming worn over time from handling and normal corrosion processes.
Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara (detail); ninth-tenth century; copper-tin-zinc alloy; 15.5 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art. (*left*).

15. Image with thin silver foil hammered over fangs and teeth, on the eyes, and on the hair; remnants of gold paint on face and a red pigment on the hair.
Bhairava (detail); eighth-ninth century; leaded brass; 22.2 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art. (*right*).





Silver foil was also used in decorative work. For example, silver foil was hammered over the
Fig. 15 fangs, teeth, necklace, hair and eyes on an eighth-ninth-century Bhairava image in The Cleveland Museum of Art. The foil is often very thin, distinguishable from inlay work only with the aid of a binocular microscope. Gold foil, although used in neighbouring Tibet, never appears on Kashmiri statues.

A black bituminous material was employed in decorating a third of all objects produced in Kashmir. This tarry black material was set deeply into the pupils of the eyes, in flowers and other decorative elements in the clothing or crown, and in chased lines of the hair to help define and give depth to the lines.

Gilding, either "mercury gilding" or "cold gold" work, does occur in Kashmir, but on fewer than 15% of all objects. The application of blue and red pigment on the hair, associated with consecration rites, is also infrequent in Kashmir. Where it does occur there is usually only one pigment present, not both as one often sees with Tibetan sculptures. Analyses have shown that both azurite (copper oxide) and lazurite (lapis lazuli) were used for the blue colour, and minium (red lead) was used to produce a red colour. Pigments were never used to delineate eyes, lips, ornaments, garment patterns, or other surface details.

Within a relatively restricted range of casting and decorating methods, the artists of Kashmir produced works exhibiting a high degree of technical proficiency. With copper, zinc, lead and tin apparently readily available, the artists were able to consistently select from a few standard alloys that they were accustomed to working with. Variation in the casting process itself was also restricted to several standard choices. Only a few methods of surface decoration were common—copper and silver inlay work, and the use of silver foil. The reasons for the standardization of Kashmiri copper alloy technology, and its resulting restricted range of techniques, are not yet well understood. However, variety in the degree of elaboration of decorative details clearly indicates that differing levels of craftsmanship existed in the various workshops, and that some patrons had greater resources available than others to support the production of more elaborate works of art.

NOTES

1. C. C. Patterson, "Native Copper, Silver and Gold Accessible to Early Metallurgists," *American Antiquity,* 36, 3 (1971), p. 308.
2. C. L. Reedy, "Technical Analysis of Medieval Himalayan Copper Alloy Statues for Provenance Determination" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1986 [University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, No. 8606473]), pp. 226-249.
3. P. K. Chatterjee, *Annotated Index of Indian Mineral Occurrences, Part I* (Delhi, 1963), p. 131.
4. G. T. Vigne, *Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo* (London, 1842), p. 5.
5. J. A. Straczek and B. Srikantan, *The Geology of Zawar Zinc-Lead Area, Rajasthan, India* (Delhi, 1966); P. T. Craddock, L. K. Gurjar and K. T. M. Hedge, "Zinc Production in Medieval India," *World Archaeology,* 15, 2 (1983), pp. 211-217.
6. J. D. Muhly, "Sources of Tin and the Beginnings of Bronze Metallurgy," *American Journal of Archaeology,* 89, 2 (1985), p. 281.
7. P. T. Craddock, "The Copper Alloys of Tibet and their Background" in W. A. Oddey and W. Zwalf, eds., *Aspects of Tibetan Metallurgy* (London, 1981), p. 10.
8. P. K. Chatterjee, op. cit., p. 80.
9. Ibid., pp. 287-298; C. L. Griesbach, *Report on the Geology of the Section between the Bolan Pass in Baluchistan and Girishk in Southern Afghanistan* (Calcutta, 1881), pp. 57-59.
10. P. Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir* (Graz, 1975), pp. 70-73, 132-133.
11. C. L. Reedy, op. cit., pp. 139-179.

□

Later Stone Sculpture
(ninth-twelfth centuries)

Robert E. Fisher

The total number of sculptures surviving from the last centuries before Muslim domination ended Buddhist and Hindu activity in Kashmir, is small. Not only are there few works remaining, but surprisingly all the stone sculptures are of Hindu deities while most bronze figures are Buddhist; yet records indicate that donations continued to be made to both religions. Due to the paucity of material, it is not possible to accurately assess the stylistic development of Kashmiri sculpture during this period. What does emerge from the limited evidence is a strong contrast in quality; on the one hand there are sculptures of artistic excellence and on the other a large number of works done in a provincial manner, with lesser skill.

Just as the eighth-century Surya temple at Martand is synonymous with the greatest artistic achievements of the Karkota dynasty, so too is the ninth-century Vishnu shrine at Avantipur identified as the centre-piece of later Kashmiri art. Both monuments are closely linked with the dominant rulers of their eras, and Avantivarman (ruled AD 855-886), although less well known than his illustrious predecessor Lalitaditya (died *c.* AD 750), was nevertheless a monarch of notable accomplishments and remains one of Kashmir's most beloved rulers. As Kalhana states: "When Avantivarman had obtained the sovereign power, after uprooting his enemies, he made, O wonder, the body of the virtuous feel thrilled on account of his great deeds."[1]

For most of the nearly one hundred years following Lalitaditya's disappearance while on a Central Asian military venture, Kashmir saw a series of largely unsuccessful attempts by his Karkota successors to regain their former glory. Not until the conclusion of Karkota rule, in AD 855, and the assumption of the throne by the first Utpala king, Avantivarman, did Kashmir begin to again see the kind of artistic patronage that had flourished throughout so much of early Karkota rule. The parallels with Lalitaditya are numerous, beginning with Avantivarman's early engineering success in diverting rivers and removing accumulated stones from lake beds, projects begun under Lalitaditya but neglected by his successors; the immediate economic benefits through the control of flooding helped begin Avantivarman's rule on a positive note. The development of Kashmir Saivism, associated especially with the tenth-century teacher Abhinavagupta, began late in the Karkota period but was nurtured during Avantivarman's Utpala period; its development was aided by the favourable intellectual climate during his reign. Likewise, Avantivarman's direct patronage, although less broadly ambitious, was considerable, and included the founding of a new capital, Avantipur, from which only two temples remain but one that could be said to rival his illustrious predecessor's Martand.

Avantivarman's finest extant monument is the smaller of the two remaining Avantipur temples, Avantiswami, dedicated to Vishnu. This monument is laid out in a smaller but similar manner to Martand, with double gate, colonnaded courtyard, raised podium for the main shrine

and the four side shrines, forming the typical *panchayatana* arrangement. In addition to various images of Vishnu, excavations of the two temples have revealed other images including Ganesha, Ardhanarishvara and Gaja-Lakshmi, and numerous coins and sculptural terracotta fragments. The stone sculptures and the several relief carvings that still remain constitute the largest single coherent body of post-Karkota sculpture and dominate the late Kashmiri sculptural tradition.

The most unusual of the stone carvings remaining at Avantiswami is a group of four reliefs, still attached to the balustrades at the foot of the stairs leading to the main shrine. The approaching worshipper is first confronted on either side by an elaborate group, each featuring *Figs. 1, 2* Kamadeva, the god of love, with his adoring consorts, and especially important in Vaishnava worship. In one, Kamadeva has six arms and in the other four, and both figures are shown in a regal, relaxed posture, displaying affection for their consorts. Each relief is enclosed by a pair of peacocks perched atop pilasters, their foliate tails continuing across the top, forming an elaborate frame for the group. The figures sit upon decorative cushions, below which can be seen parrots, associated with the god of love, and wear jewellery befitting so royal an ensemble. Such a predominant role for Kamadeva may be unique in Indian art and there are no direct precedents in the temple art of Kashmir for such elaborate reliefs.[2]

Figs. 3, 4 Another and equally unusual subject is found immediately inside the balustrades, at right angles to the Kamadeva reliefs and facing the stairs. Here are two more paired images which, like the others, are similar but not identical with each other. In this case, each panel consists of a single large male figure, in *tribhanga* posture, surrounded by a group of smaller, adoring individuals. *Fig. 5* There is also at least one other similar relief panel, now lying at the rear of the temple, broken away from its original position. In all three the principal figure raises one hand in adoration or praise and is bearded, but only one is crowned and garlanded while the others wear some jewellery and display simpler hair styles. The third image, with a bare torso, is accompanied by only one female figure, although others may once have been included. This latter image also appears to be in an earlier style more akin to Gupta types, while the two attached to the stairway are less fully modelled and more akin to Kashmiri ivory carvings than the more deeply cut and possibly earlier relief. Such crowded, active compositions, carved in a low relief style, are also known in at least *Fig. 6* one earlier work, a stone panel illustrating the popular Saivite story of Ravana shaking Mount Kailash. The same shallow carving, filling all the available space, is found in this image, but here the dynamic story lends itself well to such an energetic and complex surface treatment, communicating the power of Ravana's efforts and the ensuing panic among the figures atop the mountain, all contrasted with the only frontally disposed individual in the relief, the calm, controlled figure of Siva. This panel as well as the ivory carvings discussed by Dr. Czuma indicate the existence of a style of relief carving that was well developed by Karkota times and carried on into the succeeding dynasty, adding yet another dimension to the sculptural tradition of Kashmir.

Although it has been suggested that the bearded, crowned image may be a portrait of Avantivarman himself, regally dressed and attended by various wives and courtesans, and the paired image, directly across, but without a crown, may also be that of a ruler or warrior, indicated by the sword worn at his waist,[3] this is by no means certain. The third figure, if that of a king, is represented in almost ascetic fashion. These three figures, all with the same gesture but of differing sculptural quality, are unique to this site, and the most that may be said is that each is of princely appearance but it remains difficult to assume that they are portraits of Avantivarman or any other Kashmiri ruler.

These reliefs and a few of the stone images of Vishnu, found during the Avantipur excavations, have been published[4] and they can be joined by others in various collections that share in style and type of stone to form the best known group of Kashmiri stone carvings. Of particular interest is the retention of personified attributes, which disappeared in usage in the rest of India after Gupta times but continued in Kashmir through the tenth century.

Foremost among these images is the four-headed, four-armed Vishnu that first began appearing in the late eighth century towards the end of the Karkota period. Known as the Vaikuntha or Chaturanana image of Vishnu, this particular form of the deity has become synonymous with Kashmiri art; it is now the best known image type from the Valley, and is often rendered in brass as well. The regally attired figure of Vishnu stands between his two personified attributes, Gadanari and Chakrapurusha, with the earth goddess, Prithvi, emerging between his feet. Typically, the god wears a long garland reaching below the knees and a dagger at his waist (unique to Kashmiri versions) and holds his usual attributes in each of the four hands. The most distinctive aspect, however, is the four heads. In the front is a placid human face, with a boar and lion on either side, and a ferocious visage behind, perhaps added by the Pancharatrins to suit their

theory of *chaturvyuha,*[5] a system already noted in the configuration of Vaishnava temples in Kashmir, such as the Avantiswami.

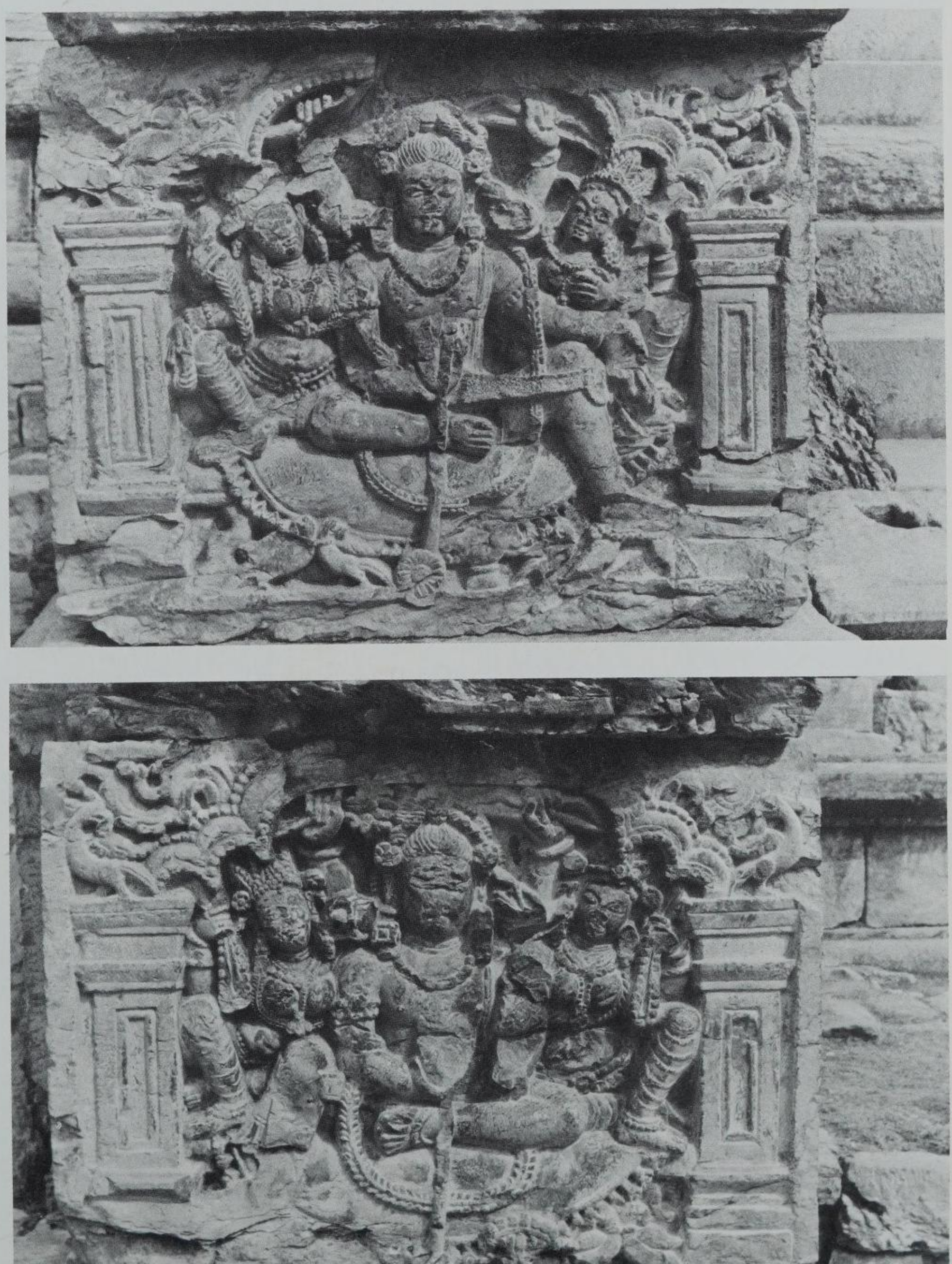
At their artistic best these images, such as the recently discovered Vishnu now in the Sri Pratap Singh Museum, are among the most impressive of all sculptures from Kashmir. The richly decorated crown, necklaces and ornaments accentuate the ample and muscular torso, always bare, while the serene face is sharply contrasted with the snarling lion and boar heads. This ninth-century Avantipur type is also distinctive for its highly polished surface, rare among Indian stone carvings, which more often than not gives it an almost metallic quality. In numerous later examples, mostly attributed to the tenth century, the surface no longer exhibits the same lustre and the three-dimensional forms are replaced by a flattened, relief style, while the lion and boar heads assume a more abstract character, almost caricatures of the earlier dynamic versions. Indeed, the entire figure lacks the vitality of the Avantipur type pieces and suggests a diminishing of patronage or energy, an inability to sustain the creative drive of the Utpala period; the large number of images rendered in the style suggests another local school, so similar are the figures.

Fig. 7

Fig. 8

The ninth-century Avantipur style extends to other images, beyond the Chaturanana form of Vishnu. The same qualities of sculptural form, vitality and metal-like surfaces can be seen on

Fig. 9



1. Kamadeva and consorts-1, Avantiswami temple, Avantipur; mid-ninth century; stone. (*above*).

2. Kamadeva and consorts-2, Avantiswami temple, Avantipur; mid-ninth century; stone. (*below*).

3. Royal(?) portrait-1, Avantiswami temple, Avantipur; mid-ninth century; stone.

4. Royal(?) portrait-2, Avantiswami temple, Avantipur; mid-ninth century; stone.

5. Royal(?) portrait-3, Avantiswami temple, Avantipur; mid-ninth century; stone.

6. Ravana shaking Mount Kailash, Kashmir; *c.* AD 800; stone. Haridas Swali Collection, Bombay.

7. Chaturanana Vishnu; mid-ninth century; stone; 122 cm. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

8. Chaturanana Vishnu; twelfth century; stone; Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

9. Harihara, Kashmir; ninth century; green stone; 68.2 cm. Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

10. Standing four-armed Durga, Kashmir; late ninth century; stone; 31.4 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Perry J. Lewis.

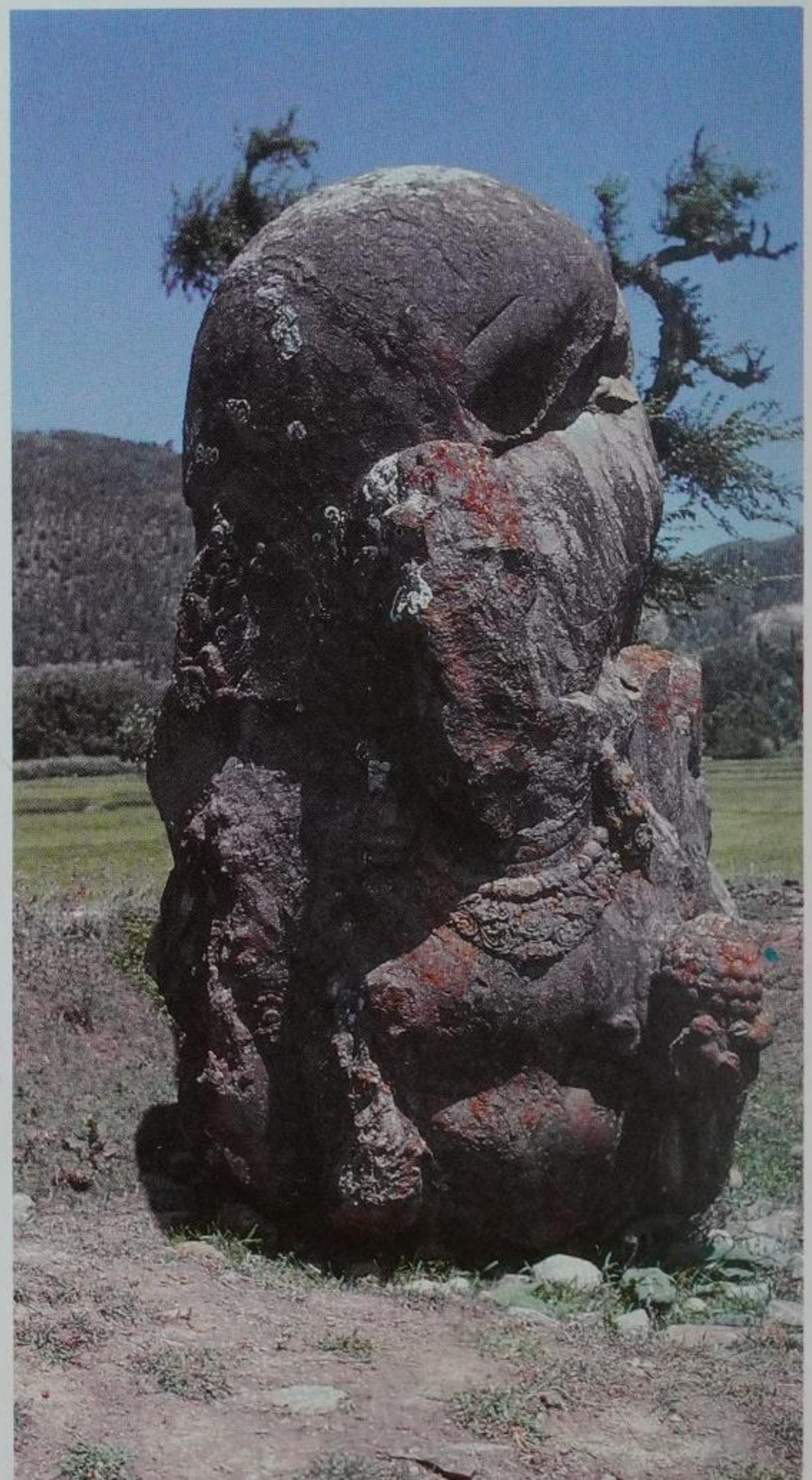
Saivite figures, such as the commanding Harihara, now in the Dahlem museum in Berlin, an image nearly identical with the Vishnu Chaturanana but for a few Saivite details such as the third
Fig. 10 eye, Bhairava head and barely noticeable erect phallus. Another variation of the Vishnu form can be seen in the impressive image of Durga, now in the Metropolitan Museum. This majestic four-armed figure, similar to the Vishnu images with its paired attendants, elaborate crown, jewellery and garland, is also rare in Kashmiri art, both as a female image as well as for several unusual iconographic features. Although she can be identified as Durga, she is not shown in the usual act of killing the demon; instead her form matches that of the regal Vishnu figures (she is regarded by Kashmiris as the queen of the gods), while she holds a ram's-head rhyton in her left hand, the only known example of such a vessel in Kashmiri art.[6] The manuscripts held by the two attendants are likewise a unique feature.

This vitality as well as a variety of forms in Kashmiri stone sculpture can be seen in several related figures which share the general style although differing in subject-matter. A squatting
Fig. 11 Narasimha, with a lotus atop his head and hands clasped over a club, exhibits the same fully sculptural proportions as the other figures and wears the typical garland over the shoulders and between the legs but also reflects real originality in the posture. As has been shown,[7] this pose, with hands atop a club or mace, is unique among Narasimha images and is probably the creation of the eighth-century Chamba artist, Gugga, who may have worked in Kashmir as well. The unusual posture, the simple, massive proportions and the powerful head, set off from the shoulders by a decorative mane, give this figure a remarkable sense of power in repose, again reminding us of what must have been lost from this era, for no other such image remains.

An interesting parallel development to the Vishnu Chaturanana, which first appeared early in the Karkota period but realized its finest artistic expression during the ninth century, can be found with the development of the Kashmiri Siva lingam. Numerous examples remain, from tiny stones easily held in the hand to colossal icons weighing several tonnes and they are found in two distinct styles. In one, only the head is shown, as seen in the monumental Maheshmurti at Elephanta, while in the other, the true Siva lingam, the torso is included with the lingam projecting

11. Narasimha; ninth century; stone. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

12. Siva lingam, near Fattehgarh, eighth-ninth century; stone.



13. Siva lingam from Rajvam (now lost); ninth century; stone.

14. Siva Maheshmurti; tenth century; stone. Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar.

15. Relief in southern wall, main shrine; Surya temple at Martand; ninth or tenth century; stone.

16, 17. Vishnu and Lakshmi riding on Garuda (front and rear views), Kashmir; eleventh century; schist; 58.4 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Museum Associates Purchase.

Fig. 12 above. Even today, there remains in a rice-field not far from the ruins of the Siva temple at Fattehgarh, one such enormous carving. Although badly damaged, three of its original four figures can still be recognized and its sheer size recalls Cunningham's description of a massive lingam found near Pandrethan. Gathering the fragments to reconstruct the lingam, Cunningham concluded it was originally one stone, nearly two metres in diameter and eleven metres tall, weighing twenty-eight and a half tonnes and included busts of four figures, just as seen today with the Fattehgarh lingam. Unfortunately, nothing remains of Cunningham's discovery beyond an unconvincing hypothetical drawing[8] but other Kashmiri stone lingams do exist, from at least as early as the sixth century,[9] with some dramatic examples from the ninth century. By that time, lingams also acquired the high polish associated with Utpala works and the masterpiece of such
Fig. 13 works remains the now lost stone, originally discovered and photographed at Rajvam. This colossal bust of Mahadeva with three heads, including the Bhairava and female forms, exudes both the power and decorative richness of ninth-century sculpture, and its destruction is
Fig. 14 one of the great losses in the history of Kashmiri art. The Elephanta type of Maheshmurti can be seen in another massive work, now in the Sri Pratap Singh Museum and usually dated to the tenth century. Although less refined it still captures much of the same energetic form, enhanced especially by its imposing size.

There exists yet another link between the temple erected by the Karkota monarch Lalitaditya and that built by his Utpala successor Avantivarman. The Surya temple at Martand has
Fig. 15 always been accepted as a donation from Lalitaditya; however, the relief carvings that surround the plinth are clearly in a later style than the images within the cella proper. These later reliefs consist of a variety of deities, including one remarkable version of Surya approaching on horseback, placed inside decorative niches with both the figures and the elaborate pilasters and capitals rendered in a style more akin to the Avantipur remains than to the eighth-century portions of Martand. In fact, most of these reliefs have the flat treatment found among many of the Vishnu images now in the Srinagar museum and attributed to the tenth century, rather than either the simple and powerful figures associated with Lalitaditya's reign or the highly polished, sculptural forms linked to Avantivarman's period. A later date for these reliefs would add yet another layer to Martand's long history, for records suggest and limited excavations support the belief held by many that Lalitaditya himself erected his great temple to the sun over the remains of yet an earlier construction, to which the outer surface of the plinth must have been added with dozens of reliefs, probably not before the middle of the ninth or even in the tenth century.

Other than Avantipur, few later temples in Kashmir retain enough examples to provide a coherent account of the development of Kashmiri stone sculpture during the period under review, although a few scattered specimens in museums have been judged to be of this period.
Figs. 16, 17 For example, a large Vishnu and Lakshmi riding on Garuda, now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, rendered in the same dark, polished stone and following earlier iconographic rules exhibits even deeper carving than earlier works and from the rear the ferocious head and elaborate leaves below fairly burst from the stone. Although carved as late as the eleventh century, this image still projects the sense of energy one encounters in earlier works and indicates the continued vigour of the tradition in the hands of a competent sculptor. But most surviving stone sculptures of the eleventh-twelfth century are of indifferent workmanship like the stiff and mannered Vishnu now in the Srinagar museum.

NOTES

1. M. A. Stein, trans., *Kalhana's Rajatarangini* (New Delhi, 1961), chapter 5, verse 2.
2. The excavator, Sahni, notes but doesn't publish "similar scenes" found at a Vishnu temple at Andarkot, but these have not been seen. See D. R. Sahni, *Archaeological Survey of India: Annual Report 1913-14* (Calcutta, 1917), p. 46.
3. D. Mitra, *Pandrethan, Avantipur and Martand* (New Delhi, 1977), p. 43.
4. R. C. Kak, *Handbook of the Archaeological and Numismatic Sections of the Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar* (Calcutta, 1923), pp. 47-57.
5. P. Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir* (Graz, 1975), p. 66.
6. Martin Lerner, *Metropolitan Museum of Art: Notable Acquisitions: 1984-85*, p. 65.
7. P. Pal, "Munificent Monarch and a Superior Sculptor: Eighth Century Chamba," *Marg*, vol. XXXIX, no. 2, pp. 9-24.
8. A. Cunningham, "Essay on the Arian Order of Architecture," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (September, 1848), pl. VII and p. 324.
9. P. Pal, "An Addorsed Saiva Image from Kashmir and Its Cultural Significance," *Art International*, vol. XXIV, 5-6, p. 34.

□

Kashmir and the Tibetan Connection

Pratapaditya Pal

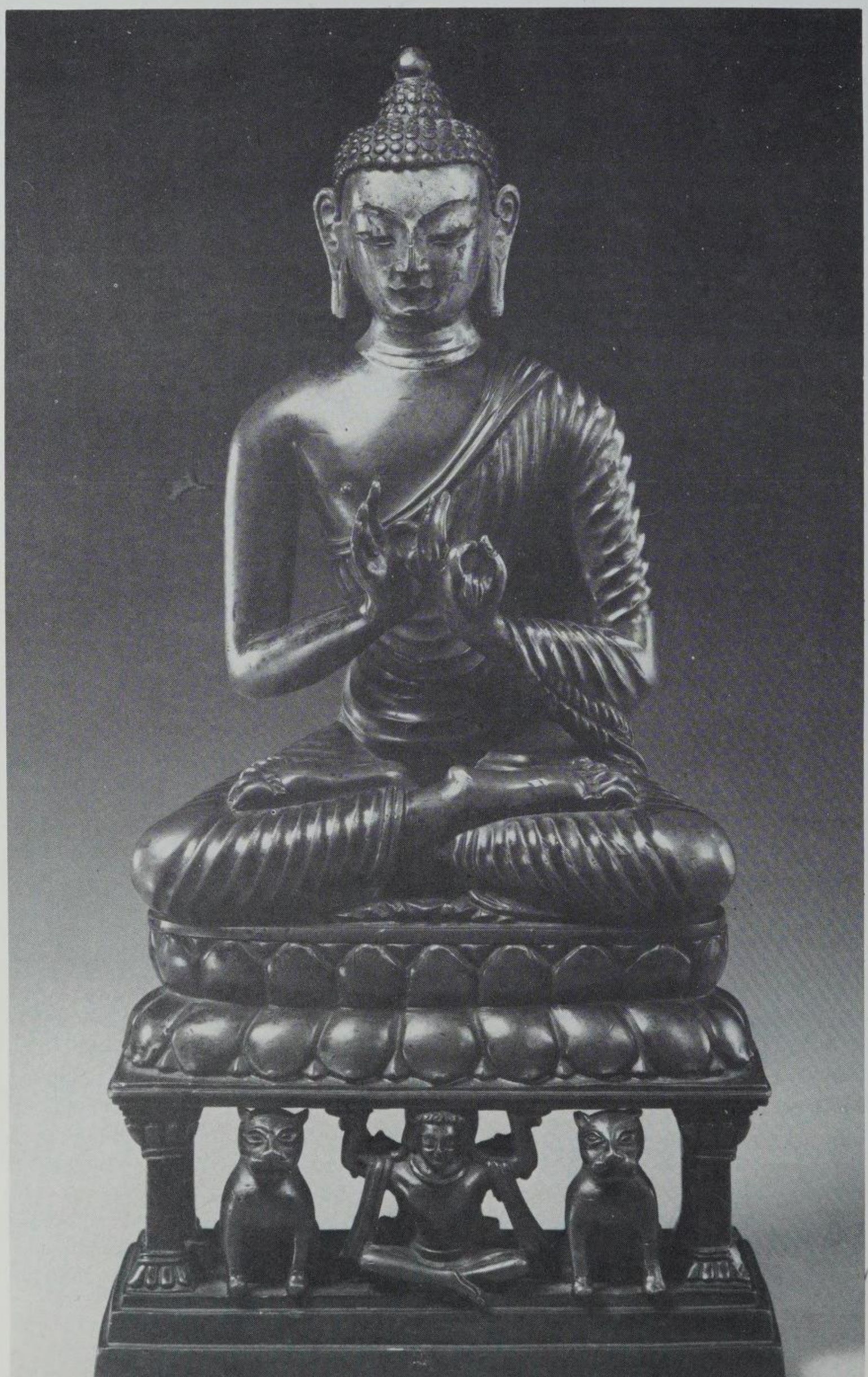
> In Kashmir also was followed the tradition of the early central art and of the old western [Indian] art. In the later period one called Hasuraja introduced new technique both in sculpture and painting. It is now called the art of Kashmir.
>
> —Taranath[1]

One of the fall-outs of the tragic occupation of Tibet by the Chinese and the consequent destruction of monasteries and flight of monks has been the emergence of Kashmiri style bronzes by the scores. These have now clearly established that Kashmir once had a flourishing school of bronze sculpture. Increasingly also it is now becoming possible to distinguish, by technical analyses, between bronzes that were made in Kashmir proper and taken to Tibet by Kashmiri and Tibetan monks, and those that were created in Western Tibetan workshops by Kashmiri as well as Tibetan artists. It is less easy, however, to determine the extent of Kashmiri influence on Tibetan painting. Although in the quotation cited above Taranath, the seventeenth-century Tibetan polymath, mentions the existence of a separate school of Kashmiri painting, no paintings of any antiquity have survived in Kashmir proper. While the tradition of painting in Bihar and Bengal during the Pala period (*c.* AD 750-1150) can be surmised from at least illuminated manuscripts, curiously to date Tibet has not yielded a single example of a manuscript copied or illustrated in Kashmir. Nor have we any *thankas* in Kashmiri style, though in recent years a large group of early *thankas* has emerged from Tibet that clearly reflects strong Pala influences. Nevertheless, principally through surviving murals in Ladakh, Western Tibet and Himachal Pradesh, one can not only get a fairly good idea of the extent of Kashmir's influence on the Western Tibetan painting tradition, but one can also form an adequate impression of what Kashmiri painting would have looked like in the pre-Islamic age had any examples survived.[2]

Kashmir's relationship with Tibet began at least as early as the seventh century, when King Song-tsen Gampo sent his minister with a delegation to Kashmir to learn more about Buddhism and bring back a script. Since then, until Buddhism disappeared in Kashmir with the Islamization of its populace, Kashmir proved to be an unfailing source of inspiration for Tibetan Buddhism and its art. This was especially true of Western Tibet, which then included most of Ladakh, Zangskar and portions of Himachal Pradesh which are now parts of India. As a matter of fact, Ladakh today is a district of Kashmir and the murals surviving in monasteries there are therefore considered to be surviving examples of Kashmiri painting. Similarly, another important site is the Tabo (Ta-pho) monastery which is now in India's Himachal Pradesh. At the time these monasteries were built, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, however, these areas politically belonged to Western Tibetan kingdoms and the monasteries were built by Tibetan

patrons. On the other hand, it is very likely that the architects and artists involved were both Kashmiri and Tibetan. Thus, the arts that have survived in Ladakh and other Himalayan regions of northern India must be regarded as the heritage of both countries.

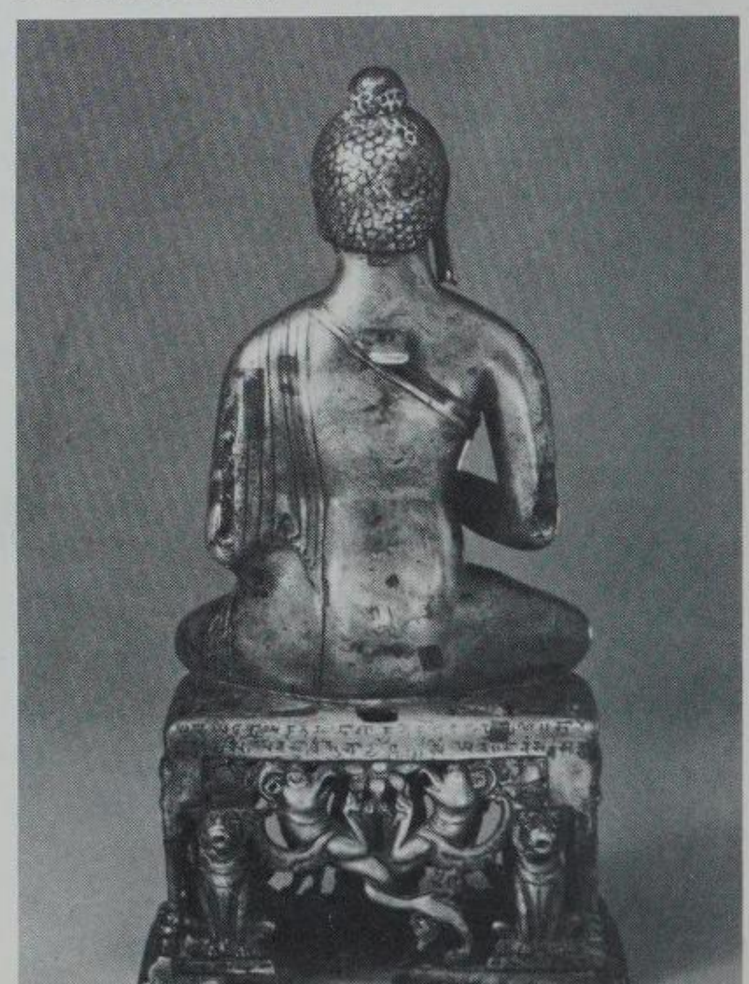
We do know that the great Tibetan lama Rinchen Sangpo (AD 958-1055) visited Kashmir and not only brought back art to his homeland but also artists, many of whom worked for the monasteries established by him as well as his royal patrons. It is not unlikely that Taranath's Hasuraja was among the artists brought back by Rinchen Sangpo. Some of these Kashmiri artists may have returned home but others probably stayed behind. Certainly they must have trained and employed local talent, for a great many monasteries were built in Ladakh and Western Tibet during this period of revival of the faith in Tibet. Kashmiri styles and art may also have penetrated further into Tibetan hinterlands because many Kashmiri monks did visit monasteries in Southern and Central Tibet. One of the most well known is Sakyasribhadra (AD 1145-1244), who came to be known among Tibetans as Khache Panchen (Pandita of Kashmir) and spent twenty-nine years in various regions of the country. Apart from such



1. A Buddha, Eastern Tibet; seventeenth century; copper alloy; 22.5 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Gift of Michael C. Phillips. (*left*).

2. Enthroned Buddha; eighth century; brass. Lahore Museum.

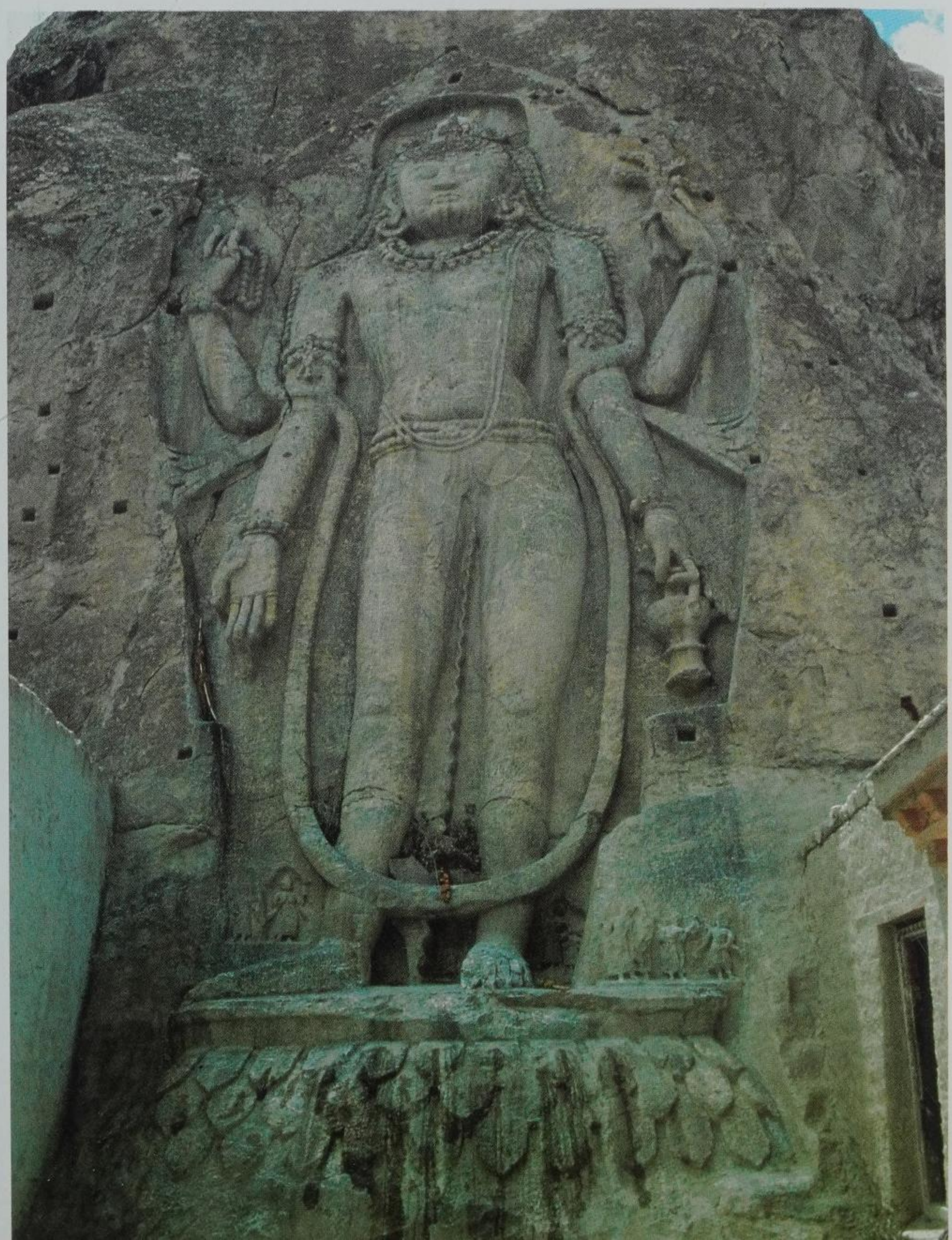
3. Reverse of figure 2.



journeys by Kashmiri monks, the existence of Kashmiri bronzes on altars of Central Tibetan monasteries as well as murals on temple walls clearly attest the fact that Kashmiri influence had penetrated far into the central region of the country and beyond.

This suggestion may be corroborated further by a bronze now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. A cursory comparison with the Fatehpur Kashmiri bronze Buddha in the Lahore Museum clearly demonstrates that the Los Angeles Buddha is a distant cousin. Yet it is a bronze probably of the seventeenth century cast in Eastern Tibet, for the face as well as style reveal Chinese influences. It obviously perpetuates a Kashmiri Buddha image of extraordinary sanctity. *Fig. 1* *Figs. 2, 3*

That Ladakh was strongly influenced by the aesthetic traditions of Kashmir should come as no surprise. Geographically it is contiguous to Kashmir, although culturally it has always been dominated by Tibetan civilization. Its political fortunes have swung between Kashmir and Western Tibet, depending upon which neighbour wielded the greater military might. Many of the so-called Kashmiri bronzes that have appeared in the art market in recent decades have emerged from Ladakhi monasteries, but one cannot yet be certain whether there were local centres for bronze casting. There can be no doubt, however, that many of the impressive rock-cut figures such as the famous Maitreya of Mulbek, or the impressive wood sculpture also representing Maitreya, are the result of local talent. While broadly they reflect strong influences *Figs. 4, 5*

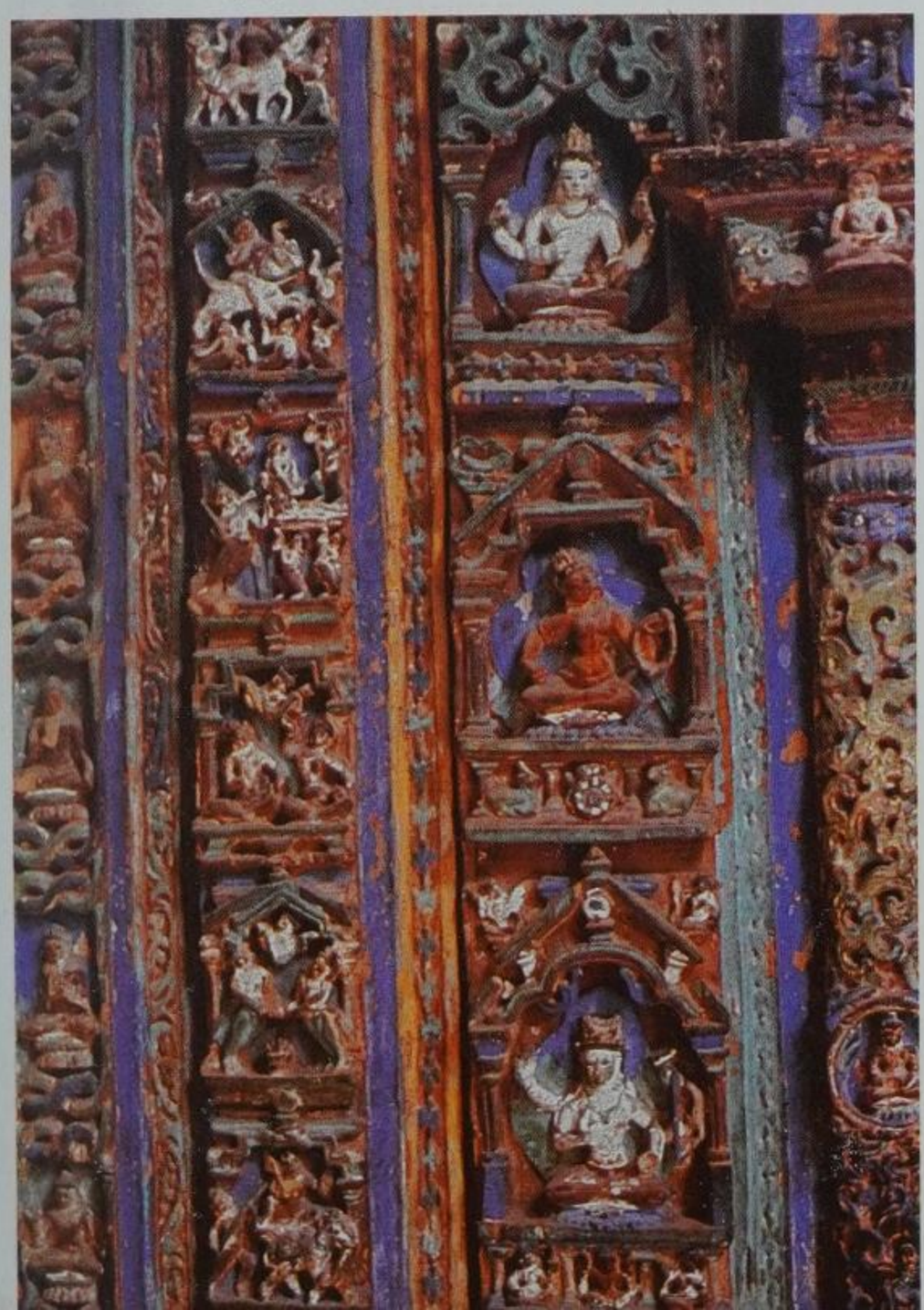


4. Relief sculpture of Bodhisattva Maitreya, Mulbek, Ladakh; tenth century.

5. Bodhisattva Maitreya, Ladakh; eleventh century; wood; about 3 m.

6. Buddha Sakyamuni; *c.* AD 1000; brass with silver inlay; 90.5 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Purchase, John. L. Severance Fund.

8. Carved entrance to the Dukhang, Alchi, Ladakh; eleventh century; painted wood.



7. Shrine with the goddess Tara, Western Tibet or Himachal Pradesh; eleventh century; wood; 45.1 cm. Kronos Collection, New York.

of the Kashmiri sculptural tradition, the custom of carving colossal images from live rock in Ladakh may well have been inspired by rock-carved reliefs in the Swat Valley and Afghanistan. The carvings at Mulbek, Khartse or Shey may have been rendered in the ninth-tenth century, but the wood Maitreya cannot be dated earlier than the tenth.[3] It can be compared
Fig. 6 with the well-known Cleveland Buddha Sakyamuni of *c.* AD 1000, or other similarly datable sculptures of the tenth-eleventh century.

Fig. 7 An exquisitely carved shrine in the Kronos Collection in the Metropolitan Museum of Art is another fine example of ancient wood-carving in the region. Writing about this shrine, Martin Lerner has correctly observed:

> While it may not be possible to assign this wood carving to a specific site, the treatment of the female deity fits easily into what we know of the tenth-eleventh century styles of Kashmir, Ladakh, and western Tibet. The elegant attenuation and proportioning of the body, the large *utpala* flower, and the jewelleries and high crown, along with the distinctive asymmetrical hair arrangement, clearly belong to western Himalayan traditions of that date.[4]

Lerner further suggests Tabo in Himachal Pradesh as a possible provenance. It should be
Fig. 8 noted though that the carving is stylistically similar to those that still adorn the entrances to some of the temples at Alchi.

Altogether such carvings clearly demonstrate that pre-Islamic Kashmir must have had a flourishing tradition of wood-carving. Wood being more easily perishable, due to both climatic conditions and fires, nothing has survived in Kashmir proper. In his history Kalhana does mention devastating fires in Srinagar, one of the worst being that which occurred in AD 1123:

> Srinagara, bereft of its Mathas, shrines, houses, shops and the like was burned, in a mere trice, into a forest which has been burnt down. The colossal statue of Buddha, darkened by smoke and without its dwelling house, was alone visible on high in the city, which had been reduced to mounds of earth and it resembled a charred tree.[5]

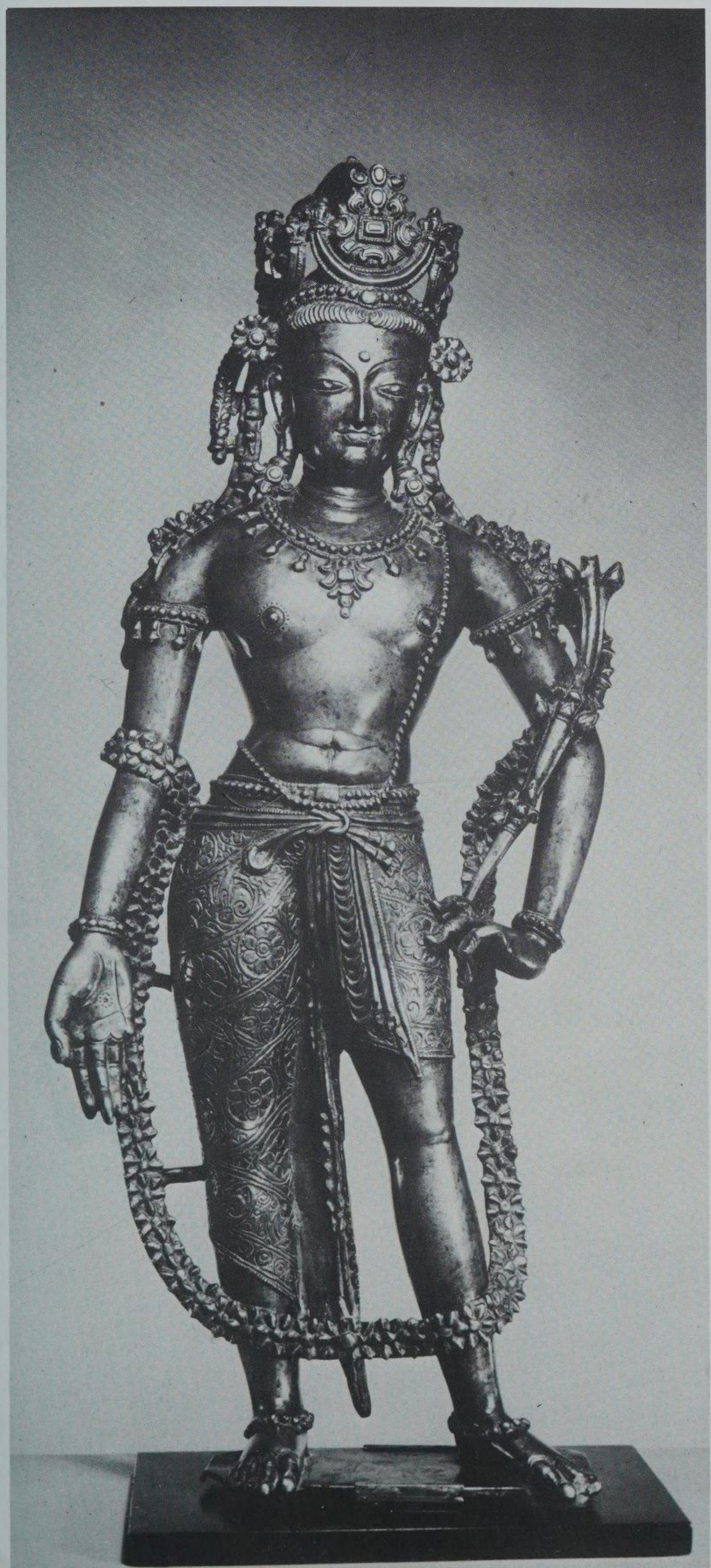
These passages make it clear that much of Kashmiri construction then, as later, was done in wood. Wood-carving has remained an important craft in Kashmir, as every visitor knows. The surviving images and architecture in Ladakh, Western Tibet and the northern Himachal Pradesh amply attest the skill and aesthetic sensibility of Kashmiri wood-carvers of the pre-Islamic period. As is the case with bronzes and murals, it is possible that some of these wood sculptures were actually carved by Kashmiri sculptors and therefore they may be regarded as much a legacy of Kashmiri wood-carving as of Tibetan.

Metal Sculpture

Nothing is more problematic than defining the relationship between Kashmir and Western Tibet in the realm of metal sculptures. Sometimes only a very rigorous technical examination of the bronzes themselves can determine whether a bronze was cast in Tibet or in Kashmir.
Fig. 9 For instance, the well-known bodhisattva in the Rockefeller Collection, frequently attributed to Kashmir, has turned out to be of Western Tibetan origin. Nevertheless, so strongly is it related to Kashmiri bronzes of the period that one must entertain the possibility of its having been manufactured in Western Tibet by a Kashmiri artist. On the other hand, the Cleveland Buddha, though bearing a Tibetan inscription, was made in Kashmir and taken to Western Tibet, where it became the personal property of the revered Nagaraja, a local prince.

At least two other stylistically related bronzes, though not of the same quality, also bear inscriptions that identify them as belonging to Lhatsun Nagaraja.[6] One of the figures
Figs. 10, 11 represents Bodhisattva Maitreya, while the other is somewhat difficult to identify. The Buddha in his hair is either Akshobhya or Ratnasambhava. His right hand holds a rosary as does Maitreya's. His left hand holds an *utpala* (blue or night lotus) which supports a bowl. The braids of hair on his head, however, make it probable that the figure is a form of the Bodhisattva Manjushri. Stylistically both bronzes seem to be Kashmiri, but one cannot be certain until a technical analysis is carried out whether they were made in Kashmir or in Western Tibet. On the
Fig. 12 other hand, a superbly modelled and finished Buddha has been attributed definitely to Kashmir as a result of technical analysis. Without this, however, the bronze may have been regarded as a Western Tibetan work showing vestigial Kashmiri influences. Neither its physiognomy nor its modelling echoes the Kashmiri style. The abstractly conceived form and the subtle delineation of the robe relate it to sculptures of Gupta India, while the features and shape of the face are only remotely reminiscent of a Kashmiri Buddha. One would have to admit

9. A bodhisattva, Western Tibet; eleventh century; brass with inlay; 69.2 cm. The Asia Society, New York, Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, 3rd Collection.



10. Bodhisattva Maitreya, Kashmir or Western Tibet; eleventh century; brass; 32 cm. Private Collection.

11. A bodhisattva, Kashmir or Western Tibet; eleventh century; brass; 31 cm. Private Collection.

that this particular sculpture is a highly individualistic work by an unknown master sculptor. In a previous catalogue it was assigned to the tenth-eleventh-century Western Himalayas with the suggestion that "the piece is clearly influenced by Northeast Indian art of the ninth and tenth centuries."[7]

The difficulty in distinguishing Kashmiri bronzes from those made in Western Tibet is also evident from the following comparison between the bodhisattva in the Rockefeller Collection and a Vajrasattva in the Musée Guimet in Paris.

As mentioned earlier, the Rockefeller bronze has been consistently published as a Kashmiri figure, while the Guimet bronze has been assigned to Western Tibet.[8] While the attribution *Fig. 13* for the Guimet bronze seems assured, a technical analysis has demonstrated that the Rockefeller bronze was also made in Western Tibet. There can be little doubt, as suggested first by Beguin, that the Rockefeller bronze was very likely a creation of Mati, a Kashmiri artist who is known from an inscription on the base of a bronze in the Samada monastery in Western Tibet.[9] Indeed, the Rockefeller bronze and Mati's bodhisattva at Samada are so alike, and are similar to so many others, such as the impressive figure in the Nitta Collection in Japan, that one must *Fig. 14* assume that Mati and his atelier, somewhere in Western Tibet (perhaps at Tsaparang, the capital of the Guge Kingdom), were in great demand and may have satisfied the pious needs of Tibetan donors for a long time. Mati's own works such as the Rockefeller or the Nitta bronze are naturally strongly Kashmiri in style, whereas those of his Tibetan colleagues and successors, such as the Guimet bronze, not unexpectedly reflect variations from the models.

12. Buddha Sakyamuni or Akshobhya, Kashmir; ninth century; brass; 20.3 cm. Private Collection. (*opposite page*).

13. Bodhisattva Vajrasattva, Western Tibet; twelfth century; brass with inlay; 75 cm. Musée Guimet, Paris. (*left*).

14. Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, Western Tibet; eleventh century; 82 cm. M. Nitta Collection, Tokyo. (*right*).

Among other sculptures that were made in Western Tibet but in a strongly Kashmiri style, mention may be made here of a spirited representation of a Yama or Yamari and a charming goddess, perhaps representing Kurukulla. Back in 1975, I published the Yama or Yamari as an example of Kashmiri workmanship, a view reiterated by von Schroeder.[10] A technical analysis, however, demonstrates that it was manufactured in Western Tibet, very likely by one of the Kashmiri artists brought by Rinchen Sangpo.[11] The Kurukulla is clearly related in style to similar figures that adorn the temples of Alchi and was most likely made either in Ladakh or Western Tibet. A unique Western Tibetan object reflecting Kashmiri influence is a fine, early *phurbu* (magic dagger) which is an object that appears to have been used only in Tibet and cultures dominated by Tibetan Buddhism. Although it is a Tibetan version of a ritual object characterized in Sanskrit texts as a *vajra-kila* (thunderbolt-peg), no example has yet been found in India. The crowning heads in this particular example are closely related to tenth-eleventh century Kashmiri style figures and it may well have been made by a Kashmiri artist in Western Tibet.

Figs. 15, 16

Fig. 17

The present evidence indicates that the Kashmiri influence was strongly felt in Western Tibetan sculpture during the tenth and eleventh centuries, when dozens of Kashmiri artists were present in the region. Thereafter the flow of Kashmiri bronzes into Western Tibet seems to have decreased, and the later kings of Guge were not as zealous in supporting the faith as were those of the earlier generations. By the fourteenth century Kashmiri influence became vestigial and a more distinctive Western Tibetan style emerged.

15. Yama or Yamari, Western Tibet; eleventh century; brass; 10.2 cm. R. H. Ellsworth Ltd., New York.

16. Goddess Kurukulla (?), Ladakh or Western Tibet; eleventh century; copper alloy; 22.8 cm. Private Collection.

17. *Phurbu* (magic dagger), Western Tibet; eleventh century; brass; 21 cm. Private Collection.

Mural Painting

A parallel development may also be witnessed in the surviving murals in the monasteries of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh and Western Tibet. Despite the decay and destruction of many
Fig. 18 murals, an impressive number has survived. Some, such as those at Alchi in Ladakh, are now well known, but others such as those at Tabo (Ta-pho) or the remains in the Western Tibetan monasteries are less familiar. Once again in such murals one notices a strong Kashmiri style dominant in the late tenth and eleventh centuries and a more recognizably Tibetan style emerging from the thirteenth century. By far the largest number has survived at Alchi and Tabo, and although the murals show some stylistic differences, there is no doubt that they are two different expressions of the same aesthetic vision and painting tradition. Quite possibly, two different groups or families of Kashmiri artists brought by Rinchen Sangpo worked at the two sites. Nevertheless, it is now generally recognized that these murals are of as great an interest for the history of Kashmiri painting as they are for Tibetan.

Fig. 19 At Alchi, the Kashmiri style paintings, probably rendered in the second half of the eleventh century, are concentrated in the three-storeyed temple known as the Sumstek and the assembly hall known as the Dukhang. Both were built by the brothers Tshultrim O and Kalden Sherab, members of the powerful Dro clan. Belonging to an ancient clan in Western Tibet, the Dro family had provided queens to the Yarlung dynasty of Central Tibet as well as to the tenth-century founder of the Ladakh dynasty. Both Kalden Sherab and Tshultrim O were pious Buddhists and were most probably influenced by the great Rinchen Sangpo. Kalden Sherab was also known as the "teacher of Sumda," a monastery in Zangskar founded by Rinchen Sangpo. That some of the artists responsible for the murals were Kashmiri is clear from some of the faint inscriptions discernible among the Sumstek murals written not in Tibetan but in the Sarada script of Kashmir.

Surviving inscriptions at Tabo inform us that the monastery was founded by Yeshe O and Rinchen Sangpo, but extensive repairs were undertaken by Yeshe O's grandson Changchup O in the mid-eleventh century. Most probably this is when the murals were executed. Although
Fig. 20 iconographically less complex than the Alchi murals, the early paintings at Tabo are no less fascinating for their subject-matter as well as stylistic brilliance. Unlike Alchi and other

18. Eleventh-century mural in the Sumstek at Alchi showing Bodhisattva Manjushri and other deities. (*left*).

19. Eleventh-century mural in the Dukhang at Alchi showing various Buddhist deities. (*right*).

20. Eleventh-century mural in the Dukhang at Tabo showing a bodhisattva. (*opposite page*).

Fig. 21 sites associated with Kashmiri style paintings, the sculptures and murals in the Dukhang at Tabo constitute a giant Vajradhatu mandala dedicated to the cult of the Supreme Buddha known as Sarvavid Vairochana. Thus, when the monks and devotees enter this structure, they immediately become an integral part of the mandala.

Among the most fascinating murals in the Dukhang are the narrative themes occupying the lowermost registers of the walls. There are life scenes of the Buddha Sakyamuni, stories of his previous births known as jatakas, and the story of Sudhana's search for enlightenment which forms the subject-matter of the well-known Mahayana sutra known as the *Gandavyuha.* It may be recalled that these are the cycles of stories that are encountered in the great Borobudur in Java as well. Although as part of the Avatamsaka sutra the *Gandavyuha* played an important role in the Buddhism of China and Japan and in a more limited fashion of Java, there is very little artistic or literary evidence of its popularity in India. The two places in South Asia where this sutra was popular are Nepal and Western Tibet, where it is artistically represented in several monasteries. Thus the importance given to the *Gandavyuha* at Tabo may well indicate familiarity with the text in the Kashmir region. It may be noted that although the *Gandavyuha* is of South Indian origin, it was transmitted to China from Khotan, a region of Central Asia that had close cultural links with Kashmir. Moreover, the Tibetans were a strong physical presence in Central Asia for almost two centuries (*c.* AD 632-822) and continued to retain religious and other ties with Khotan. It is not improbable that after the ninth century with the arrival of Islam in Khotan and the neighbouring region, monks from the area migrated to Tibetan monasteries.

Apart from Rinchen Sangpo's close association with Kashmir, several Kashmiri pundits are known to have visited Tibet during the eleventh century. One of them, Jnanasri, whose exact dates are not known but who must have lived around AD 1050, was known to have visited Tabo and lived there for three years. He may well have participated in Changchup O's restoration of the Dukhang and assisted in devising the iconographic programme. In any event, the selection of the *Gandavyuha* as the sutra to be illustrated was particularly appropriate for at least two reasons. Sudhana's search for enlightenment was very likely a kind of metaphor
Fig. 22 for Changchup O's own search for the same goal. More importantly, Vairochana is unquestionably the most exalted Buddha in the *Gandavyuha,* as he is in the mandala that constitutes the overall iconographic programme of the Dukhang.

In the illustrations of the sculptures and murals reproduced here we encounter iconic representations of bodhisattvas associated with the mandala of Sarvavid Vairochana and a

21. Eleventh-century painted sculptures in the Dukhang at Tabo.

22. Eleventh-century mural in the Dukhang at Tabo showing a scene from the *Gandavyuha*.

scene from the *Gandavyuha.* This scene very likely depicts the final instruction of Sudhana from the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. Framed by lofty mansions representing Samantabhadra's palatial residence, the bodhisattva extends his right arm to touch Sudhana's head and thereby confer the final samadhi. The young Sudhana kneels to the bodhisattva's right. In these representations he is clearly a Tibetan youth. The scene is witnessed by all sorts of divine and celestial figures, including nagas and *yakshas*, presided over by Vairochana.

The close stylistic relationship among these eleventh-century murals, whether at Alchi, Tabo or in the other early temples associated with the Guge royal family and Rinchen Sangpo, is by now an established fact. Even though no paintings survive from Kashmir proper, a comparison with contemporary Kashmiri sculpture makes the kinship clearly evident. The figural types are simply painted versions of bronzes, and reflect a strong predilection for depicting naturalistically modelled forms by both shading and modulated colours. Where the paintings differ from the sculptures and from all other contemporary styles of Indian painting is in the sumptuous delineation of patterned garments and scarves that introduces us to a world of luxuriant ostentation. This is of course in keeping with the paradisaical symbolism of many of the murals, for the Buddhas and bodhisattvas they depict inhabit heavenly rather than earthly realms.

Another noteworthy difference between these Kashmiri style paintings and those in contemporary western India or the eastern Indian monastic establishments may be noted in the application and tonality of the colours. Not only is the palette in Western Tibetan murals much more varied, but the tonality expresses a rich intensity that makes them luminous. There is no doubt that the style depends primarily on colours for its aesthetic effect. Glowing and resonant colours with a smooth glossy finish continuously strike the viewers' senses, as if the divine figures themselves are sources of effulgence. Neither in contemporary Jain nor Buddhist manuscript illuminations elsewhere in India does one encounter so vibrant and resplendent a world of scintillating colours.

What is rather curious is that no *thankas* painted in this style have survived. If they have, they have not yet emerged from the dark recesses of Western Tibetan monasteries. The earliest surviving *thankas* from this region cannot be dated much earlier than the fourteenth century, and they are executed either in a variation of the Kadampa style painting, as witnessed for instance in the Lakhang Soma in Alchi, or in more recognizably Tibetan styles, as seen in the well-known "Guge" style *thankas* or the extraordinary Milarepa *thanka* in Los Angeles.[12] This absence of Kashmiri style *thankas* is particularly surprising when a large number of early *thankas* rendered in the Pala style, which I have characterized as the Kadampa style, has been recognized. Considering that the tradition of painting on cloth was well established in Central Asia, Nepal and Tibet, it would be most unusual if the practice was unknown in Kashmir.

For what it is worth, there is one piece of literary evidence that indicates that *thankas* were not unfamiliar in Guge as early as the eleventh century. In an abridged biography of Atisa translated from the Tibetan by S. C. Das, we are given the following description of the Indian monk's welcome upon his arrival at the outskirts of Toling:

> Then when nearing Tholin Lhai Wan Chug, the great minister of the king of Tibet with the palms of his hands joined together thus addressed Atisa:—"We welcome you, oh Prabhu, master of the devotional mood of our religion! You have come thus far out of your compassion to all living beings. You have come to timely import your precepts to us, unmindful of the fatigues of the journey". So saying he presented him with *a tapestry painting of Avalokitesvara which had forty arms worked upon cloth.* [italics ours]. Atisa immediately consecrated it.[13]
>
> If this is true, and there seems no reason to doubt the passage, then we can even form some idea of the appearance of this *thanka*. Among the murals in the Sumstek at Alchi is a beautiful representation of an Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara with twenty-two instead of forty arms, surrounded by various Buddhas and two Taras.[14] Indeed, the composition of the group, as also of several others among the murals, is strongly reminiscent of *thankas* which may well have been used as models.

Manuscript Illumination

Fig. 23 Fortunately, the chance survival of some eleventh-century examples, now in Los Angeles, demonstrates that there was a tradition of illuminating manuscripts in the Kashmiri style.[15] Recovered by Tucci from a ruined monastery in Toling, they remain the only examples to date

that are directly related to the murals of Western Tibet. In fact, recently some murals have been discovered in a stupa at Toling that leave no doubt of the local origin of the illuminations.[16] A comparison between these murals and one of the Los Angeles manuscript illuminations showing the worship of the goddess Prajnaparamita makes their stylistic kinship obvious.

The monastery at Toling was built by Rinchen Sangpo himself, and it is not improbable that these illuminated pages of a *Prajnaparamita* manuscript are from a copy owned by the great translator himself. Even though the text is written in Tibetan, the illuminations were most probably rendered by one of the Kashmiri artists brought back by Rinchen Sangpo. It may also be noted that Rinchen Sangpo did return with manuscripts copied in Kashmir and some of these may well have been illustrated. One wonders if the Los Angeles pages were not recovered from the stupa where murals in the same style have been discovered.

The only other examples of manuscript illumination that are generally cited as reflecting the Kashmiri tradition are the well-known Gilgit book covers now preserved in Srinagar.[17] Even a cursory comparison of these miniatures, however, with the Los Angeles illuminations and the Western Tibetan murals reveals their strong stylistic differences. The Gilgit covers may well have been done locally or rendered further north. Neither in form nor in colour do they relate directly to the Kashmiri-Tibetan style.

Ever since the illuminated pages in Los Angeles were first published by Tucci in 1949, they have remained the only examples of Kashmiri style portable painting to have emerged from Tibet. Recently, however, a few other documents have come to light that indicate the existence of other examples. One such is a wood book cover with five deities painted on the inside. The size of the cover makes it clear that it was intended for a Tibetan rather than a Kashmiri book. Kashmiri books must have been written on birch bark, and would have been much smaller. *Fig. 24*

That the paintings are stylistically related to the murals at Alchi and Tabo and the Los Angeles manuscript illuminations is self-evident, although neither the drawing nor the colouring is as sophisticated or brilliant. The relationship with the Alchi murals is particularly clear in the distinct figural forms with attenuated waists, the design of the decorative scrolls above the figures, and especially the stylized animal motifs along the bottom. Again as at Alchi, the artist exhibits his interest in patterned textiles but the details are rendered more sketchily. The artist responsible for this cover seems to have been rather uncomfortable in delineating side faces and in the use of shading. While in the murals or in the Los Angeles illuminations, the

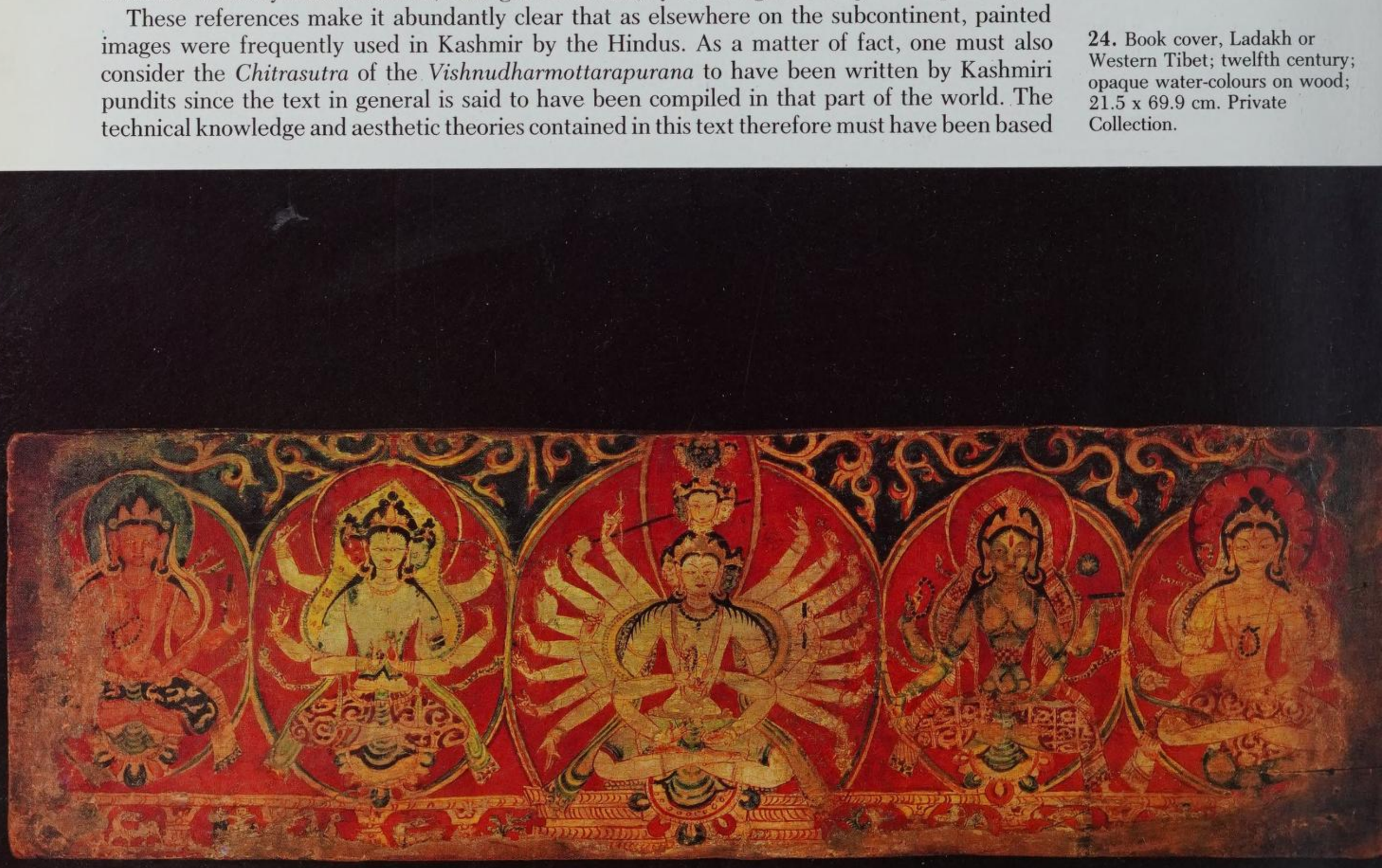
23. Worship of the goddess Prajnaparamita from a *Ashtrasahasrika Prajnaparamita* manuscript, Toling, Western Tibet; eleventh century; opaque water-colours on paper; 19 x 66.3 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, From the Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Purchased with funds from the Jane and Justin Dart Foundation.

shading is subtle and unobtrusive, in the cover the form of the green Tara on the left of the central cosmic bodhisattva, perhaps Manjushri, demonstrates unusual treatment. Generally the colours are applied much more flatly, and the figures are not as smooth and suave. Most likely the cover was painted in the twelfth century by a Tibetan artist who was not as skilled as the artists responsible for the brilliant murals of Alchi and Tabo or the Los Angeles manuscript illuminations.

In conclusion, there can now be no doubt that Taranath was correct in his observation about the distinctive style of painting in Kashmir. Hasuraja may not be simply a mythical character, but may well have been a master artist who came to Western Tibet and was remembered as an innovator, just as the fourteenth-century Nepali master artist Aniko was in China. Even though no direct evidence of paintings in ancient Kashmir has survived, one can now postulate the existence of a Kashmiri school of painting from surviving murals and manuscript illuminations from Tibet as well as from neighbouring Pakistan, Afghanistan, and from Central Asia where Kashmiri monks played so important a role in disseminating the Buddhist faith. One could assume that Kashmiri artists too followed in their footsteps, just as they did with Rinchen Sangpo and others in Tibet.

As to the literary evidence, Kalhana says nothing about any kind of painting in Kashmir. However, that painted images were used in Hindu rituals in ancient Kashmir is known from the *Nilamatapurana,* a text compiled in Kashmir around the eighth century. Several passages in this text allude to such painted images. Once we are told that "In the month of Asadha, Kesava's [Vishnu's] statue, sleeping on the couch in the form of Sesa, should be made of stone, clay, gold, wood, copper, brass, silver or He may be painted in a picture."[18] Furthermore, the texts inform us that images of Kamadeva as well as of Indra and Sachi should be painted on cloth, while the Buddha's birthday was celebrated, among other means, by adorning the *chaityas* with paintings.[19]

These references make it abundantly clear that as elsewhere on the subcontinent, painted images were frequently used in Kashmir by the Hindus. As a matter of fact, one must also consider the *Chitrasutra* of the *Vishnudharmottarapurana* to have been written by Kashmiri pundits since the text in general is said to have been compiled in that part of the world. The technical knowledge and aesthetic theories contained in this text therefore must have been based



24. Book cover, Ladakh or Western Tibet; twelfth century; opaque water-colours on wood; 21.5 x 69.9 cm. Private Collection.

on the Kashmiri painting tradition. Nevertheless, the primary evidence of the lost paintings of the Hindus and Buddhists of Kashmir remains the murals and manuscript illuminations of Western Tibet. The art of Western Tibet is thus as significant for the study of Tibetan civilization as it is for the culture of Kashmir.

NOTES

1. A. Chattopadhyay, trans., *Taranath's History of Buddhism in India* (Calcutta, 1980), p. 348.
2. P. Pal and L. Fournier, *A Buddhist Paradise: The Murals of Alchi* (Basel, 1982).
3. T. Malyon, "The Oldest Wooden Statue in India," *New Scientist 20 February 1986*, 109 (1986), pp. 34-36. On the same pages in a brief boxed article Phillip Denwood also dates this colossal wood Maitreya to *c.* AD 750, but such an early date is unacceptable. Unfortunately, other than saying the sculpture is in a remote village in Ladakh, neither writer gives the exact location. We are told, however, that "the village rests in a broad valley about 4500 metres above sea level."
4. M. Lerner, *The Flame and the Lotus* (New York, 1984), p. 80.
5. R. S. Pandit, *Kalhana's Rajatarangini* (New Delhi, 1958), p. 500.
6. Parenthetically, it may be mentioned here that the discovery of these two bronzes now brings the total of figures with the same inscription (*lha* on these two bronzes is an abbreviation of *lha tsun* of the Cleveland Buddha) to three. Since they represent three different deities, one cannot accept John Huntington's interpretation of the Cleveland Buddha image. See S. and J. Huntington, *The Art of Ancient India* (Tokyo, 1985), p. 371.
7. D. Klimburg-Salter, ed., *The Silk Route and the Diamond Path* (Los Angeles, 1982), p. 170, pl. 81.
8. G. Beguin, "Bronzes Himalayens," *Le Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France*, 24, 4-5 (1974), pp. 333-344.
9. P. Pal, "Off the Silk Route and On the Diamond Path," *Art International*, 26, 2 (1983), pp. 49-52.
10. P. Pal, *Bronzes of Kashmir* (Graz, 1975), p. 168; U. von Schroeder, *Indo-Tibetan Bronzes* (Hong Kong, 1981), pp. 124-125.
11. See reference cited in note 2.
12. See P. Pal, *Art of Tibet* (Los Angeles, 1984), nos. P6-8 and P14.
13. S. C. Das, *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow* (Calcutta, 1965), p. 81.
14. Pal and Fournier, op. cit., pl. S62.
15. P. Pal, *Art of Tibet* (Los Angeles, 1984), pp. 123-126 for a discussion and illustrations of all the pages.
16. The murals were photographed some years ago by Japanese scholars. They adorned a ruined chorten near the Golden Temple. It seems they have since been destroyed.
17. See P. Pal and J. Meech-Pekarik, *Buddhist Book Illuminations* (New York, 1988), pp. 41-44 and references cited therein.
18. V. Kumari, *The Nilamata Purana* (Srinagar, 1973), pp. 109-111, 422-423, 432.
19. Ibid., p. 172, v. 679, p. 181, v. 713, p. 192, v. 755. Also p. 198, v. 779 for painted images of Brahma.

□

Figure Acknowledgements

Dust-jacket
Clockwise, lower left to right: Otto E. Nelson. Navin Kumar. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London. Metropolitan Museum of Art. Conservation Center, Los Angeles County Museum of Art. John Siudmak. The Asia Society, New York; Photography Otto E. Nelson. Robert E. Fisher

Centre: Robert E. Fisher

Preliminary pages
Courtesy Phillips Antiques, Bombay: pp. i, iv

The Enigma of Harwan
Robert E. Fisher: figs. 1, 2, 5, 6-8, 10, 11
Los Angeles County Museum of Art: figs. 3, 16
After D. Mitra, *Buddhist Monuments*, Calcutta, 1980, pl. 85: fig. 4
Mathura Museum, Courtesy Robert Skelton: fig. 9
Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London: fig. 12
After Colledge, *Parthian Art,* Ithaca, 1977, p. 43: fig. 13
Courtesy of The Brooklyn Museum: fig. 14
Ron Forth 9/87: fig. 15
Private Collection: fig. 17

Buddhist Architecture
Robert E. Fisher: figs. 1-5, 8, 9, 11-14
Government Museum, Mathura: fig. 6
The Asia Society, New York; Photography Otto E. Nelson: fig. 7
After Stein, *Ancient Khotan* [New York, 1975], (pl. XL): fig. 10

Stone Temples
Robert E. Fisher: figs. 1, 2, 4, 6-14, 16, 17
American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi: fig. 3
After Cole, *Illustrations of Buildings in Ancient Kashmir* (London, 1869): fig. 5
Asian Art Archives, *University of Michigan*/ACSSA: fig. 15

Early Stone and Terracotta Sculpture
John Siudmak: figs. 1-4, 6, 8-23, 25
Robert E. Fisher: fig. 5
Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi: fig. 7
Los Angeles County Museum of Art: fig. 24

Ivory Sculpture
John C. Huntington: figs. 1-4
Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London: figs. 5, 6
The Cleveland Museum of Art: figs. 7, 9, 10, 15-17, 19, 20, 22 (right)
Courtesy of the Trustees, Prince of Wales Museum of Western India, Bombay: figs. 8, 25
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: figs. 12, 13, 22 (left)
Lee Boltin: fig. 14
Otto E. Nelson: fig. 18
Courtesy of the Lahore Museum: fig. 21
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: fig. 22 (central panel)
Courtesy of the Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London: fig. 23
Graydon Wood: fig. 24

Metal Sculpture
Lahore Museum: figs. 1, 2
American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi: figs. 3, 15
The Cleveland Museum of Art: figs. 4, 16-18
Los Angeles County Museum of Art: figs. 5, 6, 13, 19-21
David Salmon: fig. 7
Charles Uht, New York: fig. 8
Otto E. Nelson: fig. 9
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford: figs. 10, 11
Robert E. Mates, New York: fig. 12
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Copper Alloy Casting and Decorating Technology
Chandra L. Reedy: figs. 1, 4, 5, 9
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Conservation Center, Los Angeles County Museum of Art: figs. 3, 6, 7, 10-14
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Later Stone Sculpture (ninth-twelfth centuries)
Robert E. Fisher: figs. 1-5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14
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Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz: fig. 9
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Kashmir and the Tibetan Connection
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Contributors

Pratapaditya Pal has doctorates from the Calcutta and Cambridge Universities, and is Senior Curator of Indian and Southeast Asian Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, as well as Adjunct Professor of Art History at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

Robert E. Fisher has a Ph.D. in art history from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, and is Professor and Chairman of the Art History Department at the University of Redlands, California.

John Siudmak worked for several years at Christie's in London, and is now an art critic and consultant for Asian arts.

Stanislaw Czuma is the Curator of Indian and Southeast Asian Art at The Cleveland Museum of Art, and is the writer of *Kushan Sculpture: Images from Early India.*

Chandra L. Reedy has a Ph.D. in archaeology from the University of California, Los Angeles, and is Associate Research Scientist in the Conservation Center of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.